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MEGA-CD
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- SAMURAI SHODOWN

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CHAOTIX!
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DAYTONA USA!
FULL REVIEW INSIDE!

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MORTAL KOMBAT III
3
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THE ORIGINAL
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CO

REGULARS

REVIEWS

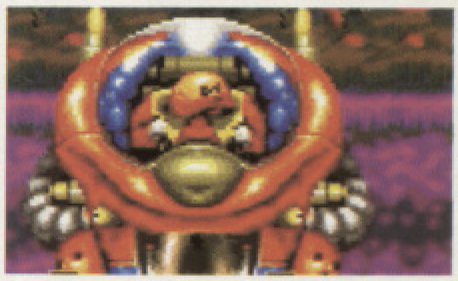
MEGADRIVE

MEGA-CD

32X

SATURN

COVER STORY 14



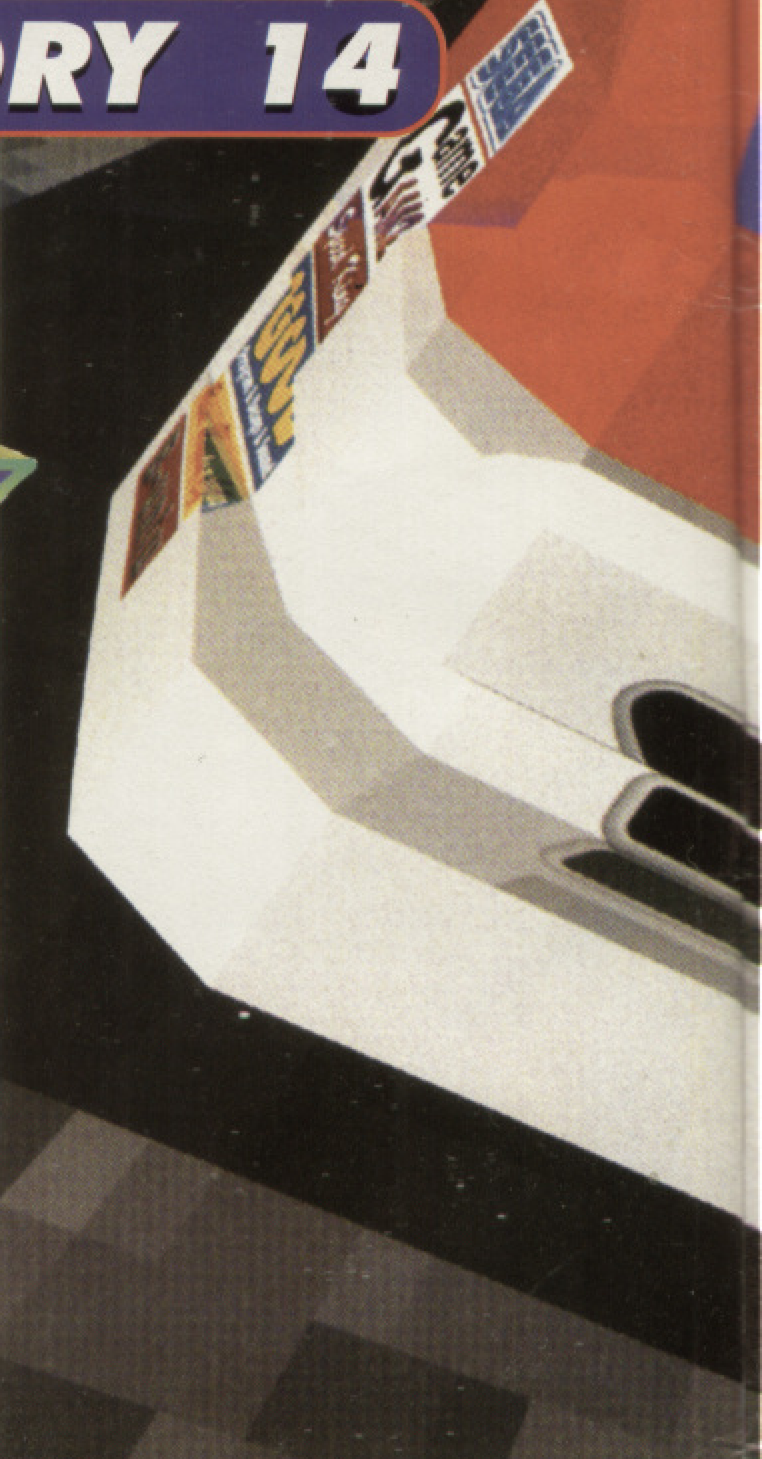
◄ *Robotnik shows off his pastel shades in his 32X debut. What next? Polygon Robotnik...*

CHAOTIX



MEAN MACHINES EXCLUSIVE

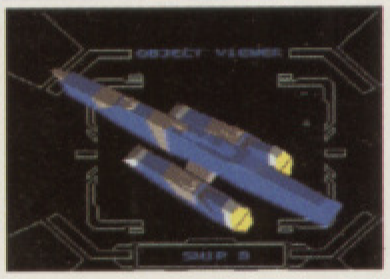
There are certain things that can only be done by two people. Like three-legged races. Chaotix is the video game equivalent of that time-honoured event, set in a psychedelic world of earnest 32X-ness. Our review reveals if this is the game to make the machine.



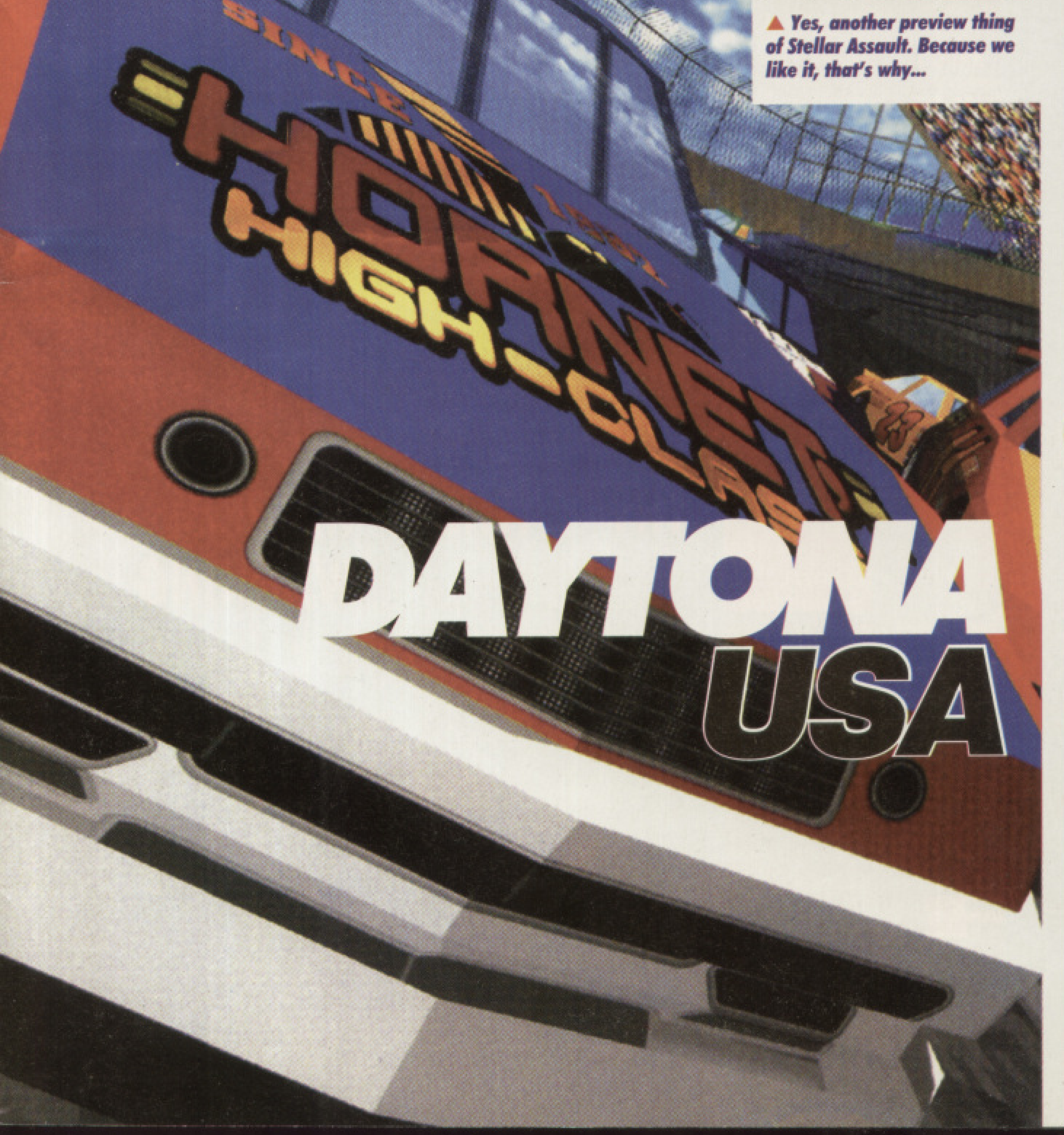
NTENTS



▲ *Fever Pitch barges in for the review treatment. Is it a FIFA beater? Just read it, OK...*



▲ *Yes, another preview thing of Stellar Assault. Because we like it, that's why...*



FEATURES

PREVIEWS

THE CARTRIDGE FAMILY

EDITOR
STEVE 'E3' MERRETT
PART EDITOR
OSMOND 'loverman' BROWNE
DE-CUTEY EDITOR
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IAN 'tufty' THOMPSON
PRODUCT MANAGER
NICHOLA 'bangkok' BENTLEY
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
GRAHAM 'hooray!' TAYLOR
SPECIAL THANKS TO:Gary and Symian for the hospital pic, Nick at ACE, and Shan/Cheryl for beers.
SPECIAL NO THANKS:The wicked witch and her new disciple.
COVER BY
Knuckles' mum.

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IN-JOKE BITCH CORNER

Hey, what say we stop doing this and just reprint, say, reviews of platform or sports games? That way, we could rip people off for months to come before sending CVs in for MEAN MACHINES' staff jobs. Nah, on the other hand, let's do a book on racing drivers instead. And a poster. Ah, how the tables have turned since Macclesfield...

EDITO

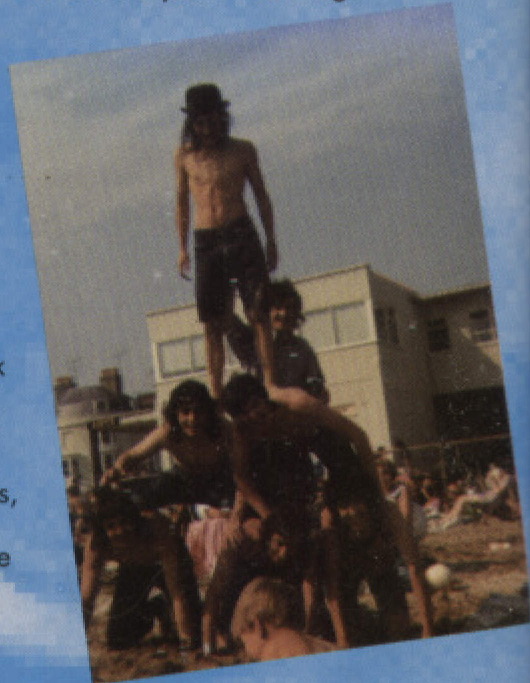


Daytona is here at long last and whilst it may not be as good as the coin-op to look at, it certainly plays as well. Now for some more good news: as of next month things are going to look a little different around here. We've upgraded Oz's crayon collection to the finest Caron D'ache pencils on the market, and are currently in the process of redesigning Mean Machines. It'll still contain all the definitive reviews, previews and news, but in a way which is much clearer and less cluttered — a little spring clean if you will. Needless to say (and despite what our bitchy rivals say), we're still going to be as hard on games as before and Mean Machines will still play host to all the best games first, it's just that the already meaty filling will have a nicer crust. We're into pie comparisons, here. So see you next month when we've had our new lick of paint,
Steve

PHOTOS FOR CASH

The depths are certainly being plummeted in this the latest instalment of cash for photos. Oz grew so depressed with the levels to which humankind is capable of sinking that he disappeared into the office toilets with a plastic knife to end it all. Panic enveloped the office as we hurriedly searched for a camera to get a pic of his dying moments! Keep em' coming!

SIX-MAN HAIRCUT DISASTER



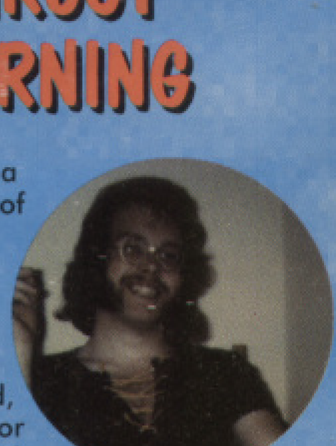
Not only is this a six-man pyramid but it dates all the way back to 1973! Check those haircuts! And that bowler hat?! No doubt they were all on the funny smokes! A definite classic. £45 is, like, hairing its way over to you S. Wright and a £5 bonus for the sheer Seventies quality. Take it easy, man, and faith in the beard.

SHAME ON THY FATHER!

Stephen Ellis sent this picture in of his dad (left). PC Plod is his right-hand man apparently. This doesn't strictly fit into any of the categories, but it is sooo sad that £10 is thundering its way to Toyland!



SEVENTIES HAIRCUT WARNING



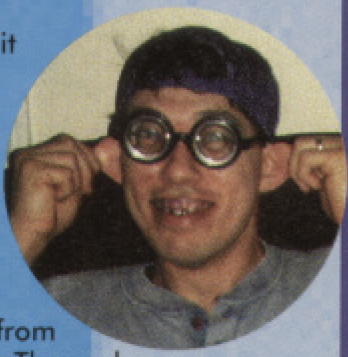
Without a shadow of a doubt this is priceless! So this is your dad, eh Gregor Thomson? Our sincerest condolences. This would normally earn you £7.50 but because we're a compassionate lot here, we've decided to throw in another 50p for those truly monstrous sideburns and that aromatic cigar!

...RIAL

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PARENT DRESSED AS SMURF — £50
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(£5 BONUS IF WORN)
TRAMPS — £10
(£10 BONUS IF PLAYING FOOTBALL)
PARENTS DRUNK AT PARTIES — £10

PLANET POP



Mr. T. A Cooke sent in this picture. Don't look for too long, though, because it all gets quite frightening and surreal. He suggests he looks like Ben from Curiosity. The real curiosity of course is how drunk God was when he put you together. For your badly designed features you earn a handsome £15!

THE LIST IN FULL...

Lot's of strange and rather frightening pictures have been turning up, so we've dropped the talcum powder and bathroom-related pictures because some were a bit overexposed! There's much fun to be had in the new categories though...

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DRESSED UP LIKE A TV CHARACTER — £30
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HERE'S A FOOT! HERE'S A MOUTH! GULP!

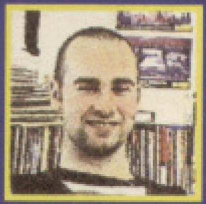
Oh dear, we shouldn't have said that...

STEVE



Steve's most embarrassing conversational faux pas wasn't actually his own. "I was working on a mag where the offices were all partitioned by exceedingly thin walls. We were expecting a visitor from a software house, and one of the others said the PR girl had a bad hygiene problem. Not knowing she had arrived and was standing in the next office along, one of my workmates strolled up to me and said 'So when's that smelly bag turning up then?' No sooner had he said it than the female in question was standing behind him!"

GUS



Gus's infection with foot-in-mouth disease sprang up while walking with a new acquaintance. "We were strolling along Shaftsbury avenue when I stopped to look at a play Tony Slattery was in. Quite innocently I started passing witty comments on what a fat git he'd become when suddenly I realised something — this friend of mine was none to thin either!" It was 'bye bye friend!' At this point, as Gus began making desperately theatrical U-turns.

OZ



Oz's started ribbing a work chum who was getting a little anxious over an appointment one of the office's 'Big Cheeses'. "You're gonna get sacked!" Oz started chanting in strictly jokey manner. But, sure enough, when said work chum returned from the 'chat' he had been sacked!. Needless to say Oz has never forgiven himself

CLAIRE



Claire's unexpected foot-lunch came when she was having a natter with a work colleague and his girlfriend. The chit-chat turned to the previous night's Sega shin-dig. "You were having fun at the party last night" she joked to the poor fella, whose girlfriend immediately said "I thought you were working late?!' Having succeeded in planting the relationship's seeds of doom, Claire made a sharp exit stage-left!

PAUL



Paul's away on holiday. Sod.

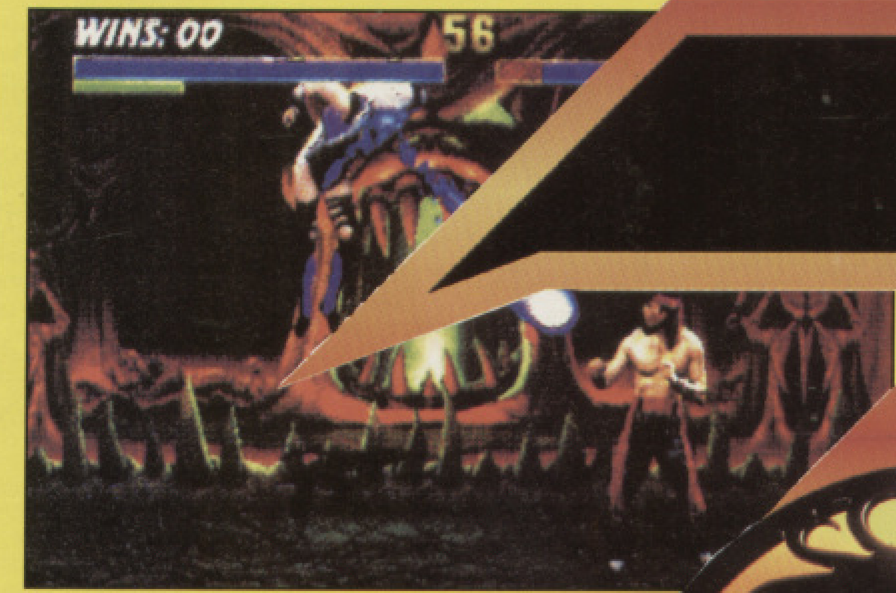
RAD



Rad's moment of cringing came after he'd heard a friend who worked in the same place as him had been sacked. "I rang him up to offer my commiserations" says Automatic "but he simply replied, somewhat bemused , that he didn't know what on earth I was talking about. It turned out that he was due to get the sack the next day and just about everyone knew about it except the man himself. Needless to say I started spluttering interference down the phone line!"

MORTAL KOM
IT'S HE

- NEW GAME
- BY MIDWAY
- ARCADE



After rumours and speculation galore, by the time you read this, a spangly new Mortal Kombat III machine should be ensconced in an arcade near you. John Tobias' and Ed Boon's third addition to the MK family offers the same side-on view and digitised sprites of the first two, but they have expanded the number of characters, moves and secret features beyond any MK fan's wildest dreams.

Eight new characters have entered the Outworld for another of Shao Kahn's fighting tournaments, and these include Kano, Sonya, and a female Goro called Sheeva. Similarly, these are joined by six old MK hands, as Scorpion, Sub-Zero and Liu Kang are among those getting the update treatment.

Other graphical enhancements include thirteen fully animated backdrops, which are 3D rendered to add extra depth, and a series of hidden warp portals, which allow the player to smash into different areas of the backdrop for a split-level fight!

In terms of gameplay, we're in familiar territory, with all the usual kicks and punches offering a variety of offensive moves. However, Midway have also added a run button which, when used with the existing six, add extra power to the moves. By far the most innovative idea, though, are the small icon-based panels which comprise a special code. The icons are made up of player heads, question marks and a series of similar pictures, and if the player pieces together their meaning, new and extremely powerful moves are added to their character's inventory. In order to milk this idea for all its worth, Midway will then be leaking clues as to what the codes mean, extending the longevity of the game.

As of yet, only the PlayStation and Atari Jaguar conversions have been confirmed, but expect the announcement of an imminent Saturn version in the next few months.



NEWS

BAT III RE!



▲ *These two practice their Bruce Forsyth impressions before the match proper.*



▲ *The Question of Sport-stylee player select. Spot Sharon Davies on the left?*



FOREVER IN SPANDEX PANTS

- NEW GAME
- BY ACCLAIM
- MEGADRIVE

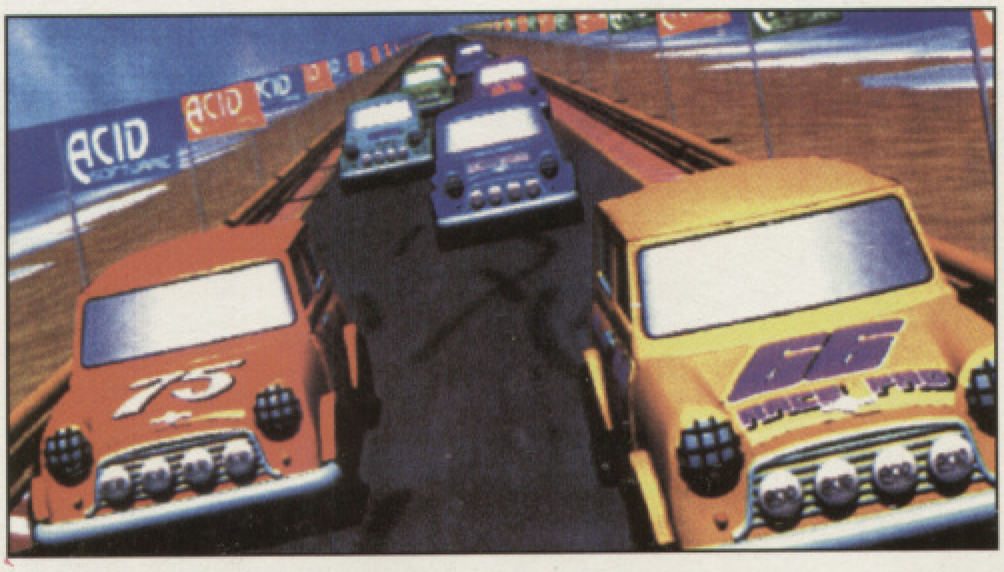
Once again MEAN MACHINES, the home of the exclusive, is the first with the big-name games. Just feast your slightly watering bloodshot eyes on this — the first shot of Acclaim's hit in the making, Batman Forever. We've seen the gaming running and it looks like it's going to be big. There's none of this cop-out platform game stuff, this is going to be a scrolling, violent punch-up mass-bundle of a game featuring digitised characters, 20 bat gadgets, a head-to-head mode and a two-player co-operation feature. Providing the programmers don't go mental, it looks as though developers, Probe, have created a game that could rival Mortal Kombat 2 for violence, and beat it into a bloody stain when it comes to specials and hidden extras. The game's slated for release this summer around the same time as the movie, and you can be your bat-boots that we'll be bringing a full preview as soon as poss.



CODIES TAKE ACID

- NEW GAME
- BY CODEMASTERS
- MEGADRIVE

As if Micro Machines II wasn't good enough, Codemasters have teamed up with Acid Software and intend to convert the Amiga roadracer, Super Skidmarks, to the Megadrive. Using the same overhead view as Micro Machines and its sequel, Super Skidmarks has more detailed graphics and complicated tracks, with up to four players battling it out for the best time and the bonuses which are scattered across the courses. Micro II fans should be in their element, as Skidmarks also contains a similar array of vehicles, including trucks and stock cars, but whether it plays as well as the 95%-rated Micro II will be revealed in an upcoming issue.



SACRE BLEU

- NEW GAME
- BY INFOGRAMES
- MEGADRIVE

Spirou means nothing as a title to us, but will probably send the French into hysterics. He's one of those unfathomable Gallic cartoon characters that Infogrames put into their games, and Spirou in particular looks like an accomplished addition to the Megadrive platform game library. Relying on a huge amount of animation and lots of variations in gamestyles, Spirou arrives some time this Summer on the Megadrive.





BUG-GER ON!

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- SATURN

In search for a next generation icon, Sega have come up with Bug, the star of a revolutionary new platform game that could only be conceived for the Saturn. Bug is a cute insectoid who inhabits a less friendly world of creepy crawlies and predators. The innovation is that the platform network he explores is in 3-D. Bug is able to walk and jump in and out of the screen as well as left to right, enabled with some amazing hardware scaling. There looks like being tons of huge levels, with opportunities for special FX every step of the way, and slapstick humour. Bug is looking like one of Sega's biggest titles of late 1995, and as an American production it will only arrive with the Saturn launch in the US, so even owners of import machines will have to wait for another five months.

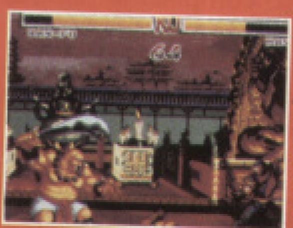


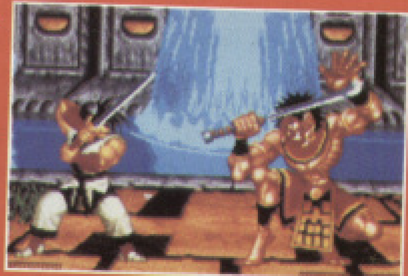


JVC COME OUT FIGHTING

- NEW GAMES
- BY JVC
- MEGA-CD

Just a quickie. Just before this issue went to press, we received copies of JVC's Mega-CD conversions of Samurai Shodown and Fatal Fury Special. Both are looking very nice, with enhanced music and larger sprites than the normal Megadrive fare. Both games are set to be released by Virgin in June, reviews to follow.







UNDERLAY, UNDERLAY!

- NEW GAME
- BY BULLFROG
- SATURN

One of the better games for the PC of late, Bullfrog's Magic Carpet is set to touchdown on the Saturn sometime next year. With their newly-arrived Saturn development kit sitting in their offices, Bullfrog are keen to port as many games over to it as possible, with Carpet the first on the runway. Magic Carpet casts the player as a wizard's apprentice who has been left to clean up the disruption using a series of spells. In order to do this, though, he flies his scrap of Axminster past the dragons and beasties now inhabiting the world, blowing them away as he does so. Scoring extremely well on the PC, we're looking forward to Magic Carpet's Saturn debut.



CHASE ME!

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- SATURN



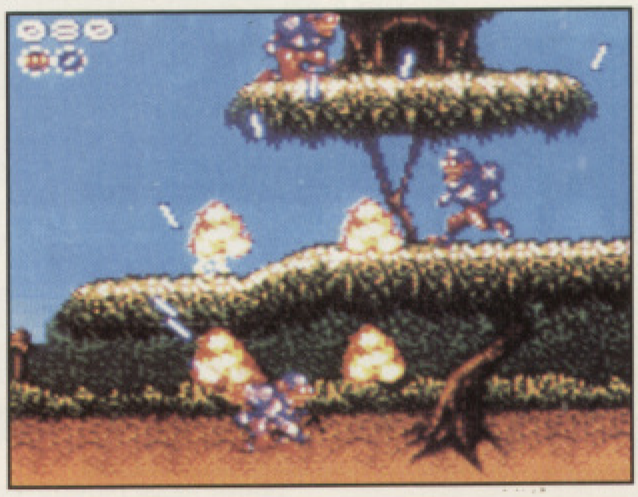


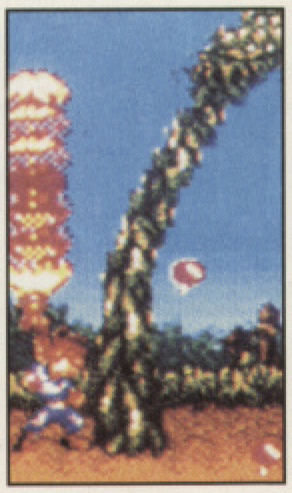
With the clamour surrounding Daytona, and the news of Sega Rally and Virtua Racing, Sega's new racing project, Grand Chaser may get side-lined. That would be unfortunate, as this space-age racer is looking very promising. Grand Chaser uses polygon CGs like Virtua Racing to create a series of futuristic tracks and spook racing sleds. Reminiscent of Nintendo's classic F-Zero, these are fitted with weaponry and take damage from collisions. This is one scheduled to follow the official launch quite closely.

GUNNIN' FOR YA

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- GAME GEAR

Gunstar Heroes, all-time classic and Golden Joystick award winner, is being reprised, but this time using the prowess of the Game Gear. The blasting action and distinctive graphics that can only be Treasure are included, along with the remarkable amount of bosses and deadly things, and gear link dual player mode. More news 'as it happens'.





CRYSTAL TIPS

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- SATURN

Pictured a couple of months ago in news, we are able to bring you more concrete details of Sega's sumptuous platformer Astal. In gameplay terms it follows a familiar platform line, but the graphics, soundtrack and effects are tremendous and unprecedented. The plot follows a crystalline kingdom under attack, and the ubiqutuous princess captured by forces of evil. Astal undertakes to rescue her with the help of his lilac feathered friend. The game has some panoramic scaling, which zooms in and out depending on the turn of events. It looks like the perfect 32-bit echo to games like Mickey Mania, but Sega are unsure if it shall get a UK release. Importers, however, should have it soon.



UNDER THE KNIFE

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- MEGA CD

Those interactive movies are flying out thick and fast, with another battle picture due from Sega — Surgical Strike. Using a control system similar to the point-and-fire gameplay of Tomcat Alley, Sega claim this is the most interactive attempt yet of bringing video footage into gameplay. Players consult a city map, which enemy forces drift around. Your choice of trouble spot has a strategic effect on the development of the game. With standards of sound and graphics similar to Fahrenheit and Midnight Raiders, Surgical Strike will join these titles for a late summer release. Although they are almost complete, Sega are waiting for their 32X compatible counterparts to be readied for simultaneous release.





DEATH'S HEAD

- NEW GAME
- BY CORE
- SATURN

Core are aiming to attract the unruly Saturn-owning tendency with Machine-head: Slaughterhouse Earth. Nominally it's the follow-up to Core Mega-CD success Battlecorps. Existing as little more than some demos and a series of concepts, it promises lots of killing and 'not for the faint-hearted gameplay', plus some ravey 'altered reality' bits. Looking to us like a worthy contender in the Doom genre, the slam suit ultraviolent antics should come to the Saturn, but sadly well after the boring PC CD ROM version.



LIGHTNING STRIKE

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- ARCADE

AM3's next arcade release is World Striker, Sega's first coin-op sports game for some time. Using the Model 2 board of Daytona and Sega Rally, it's offering textured polygon footy with all the virtua gubbins we've come to expect from the accomplished Sega Amusements division. However, our critical eye will be on the possibilities of conversion to the Saturn, to present a more appealing alternative to the lacklustre Victory Goal.





NURSE! THE STIRRUPS

- NEW GAME
- BY BULLFROG
- MEGADRIVE

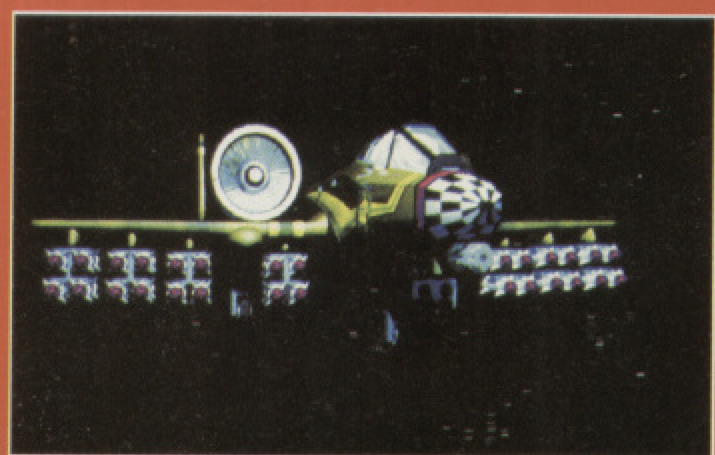
Yes, this is going to be a cry emanating from a Megadrive and Saturn near you in the distant future. Hot on the heels of the brilliant Theme Park, Bullfrog are currently working on Theme Hospital, which replaces the assorted rides of Theme Park with bedpans and limited beds, and charges the player with the task of making it profitable. Unless Virginia Bottomley owns a Sega system that is, in which case she'll close it immediately and moan about the game's lack of lasting appeal. The game is currently in the embryonic stages on the PC, with concrete details regarding its appearance and content still under discussion. Even so, we'll be keeping a very close eye on this one. 'Nurse, the bedpan...'



SURE OF SHELL

- NEW GAME
- BY CORE
- 32X

Urban and field warfare combine in Shellshock, a tank blaster modelled on classic lines from Core. In the early stages of development, they were able to take us around a fast scaling airforce base layout to show how the game is taking advantage of 32X power. Boasting amongst other things, 'hip beats' Shellshock should be persuading us around Chrimble that military service is not all potato-peeling. Unlike magazine journalism....



PYRAMID POWER

- NEW GAME
- BY CORE
- SATURN



Nothing concrete to see, but an exciting concept revealed in Tomb Raider, another of Core's 32-bit projects. A feisty female adventurer constructed from textured polygons explores a huge labyrinth of 3-D tombs in a mixture of adventure and action game styles, all in the pursuit of an 'incredible secret'. Core are not revealing anymore, for the time being at least.

GET INTO GEAR

- NEW GAME
- BY US GOLD
- GAME GEAR

US Gold's Game Gear support shows no sign of faltering as they unveil a handheld conversion of Power Drive. Converted from Rage's 16bit original, Game Gear Power Drive looks extremely close to the Megadrive original, boasting most of the courses and time trials, including snow and desert courses, and obstacle courses most rally aces would balk at. The 4MEG cart is roughly 80% complete, and a full review will grace this very mag next month.

WIN! JUDGE DREDD BOOKS GALORE!

- COMPO
- TITAN BOOKS

We've gone a bit Dredd loopy of late, and our madness is set to spread to you as we offer you the chance to win one of ten sets of Judge Dredd books from our top mates at Titan Books. Titan are offering ten sets of 'The Apocalypse War' and 'Classic Judge Dredd', both of which come highly-recommended in the JD supplement bundled with this issue. The Apocalypse War sees Dredd escaping from a Mega-City One left shattered by an East-Meg attack, before taking the battle back to them, whilst 'Classic Judge Dredd' starts from the beginning, and is a brilliant way to see how the character evolved. To win one of these sets, just answer the following question:



What is Judge Dredd's first name:

A. Joe
B. Julian
C. Jamiroquai

Scrawl your answer on the back of a postcard and send it into I'LL GO UP TO FOUR COMPO, at the usual Mean Machines address. All the usual rules apply.

YOU DON'T SAY

Anyway, he says to me and I says to him...

Hottest rumour currently doing the rounds is that Ride Racer could be heading for the Saturn. A little dicky bird told us that the PlayStation's greatest (and only) racer is currently undergoing the conversion process, and a Saturn version could appear within a few months. That should put an end to all those calls about, which is best, then...

Ocean's Waterworld game is in the hands of System 3, the chaps who made their name with countless Last Ninja games. Apparently, it uses a mixture of platform and 3D boat sub-games. No isometric Ninja attacks, then?

Whilst Core are busy rewriting their Mega-CD hit, Thunderhawk, for the PCs (retitling it Thunderhawk II in the process), word has it that the 32X could be playing host to a proper sequel at any time, using the same sort of techniques as the Scavenger pics we printed a couple of months ago.

All together now: aaaaaaaaaaaaaah! Remember how Mean Machines laid into Loadstar a few months ago, stating it was... well, complete crap. Well, after months of waiting, BMG have scrapped plans for its release. Not that it'll be missed. Oh yeah, whilst on the subject of scrapped Mega-CD stuff, a huge cock-up over at Time Warner means their Lawnmower Man CD will also never see the light of day. A duplication error meant that the American NTSC code was duped instead of the European PAL and as a result wouldn't work on UK systems. With the game hardly over-performing in the score stakes (42% within these pages), Time Warner decided perhaps it was best left as it was and scrapped it. Ouch!

Finally, don't expect to see Sega's 32X platformer, Tempo, on these shores: it has been killed off. Adding to fuel to a rumour that the 32X just cannot handle platform games. A daft oversight, surely?

Til next month,
Pip pip



1-2 PLAYERS | **24 MEG**

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

PRICE	£59.99
BY	SEGA
RELEASE	JUNE

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOYPAD
CONTINUES: BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: TRICKY
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY

1ST DAY SCORE
89,000

ORIGIN

Certainly Sonic inspired platform japery, with some experimental 32X hardware dabbling thrown in.

GAME BREAKDOWN

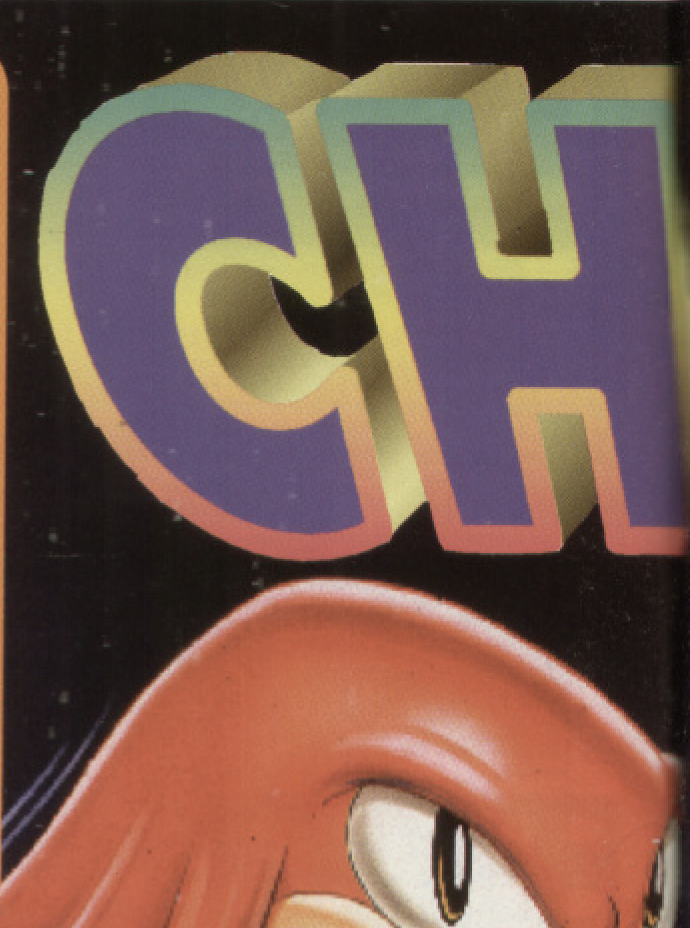


GAME AIM

Explore five areas of each five worlds, collecting the Chaos ring and defeating robotnik in each.

"Sonic, we need you! Where are you". Silence was the answer on the strange world called Moebius. When it came to doing Chaotix, Sega discovered that their mascot and arch stock-shifter had 'done a Stephen Fry'. Perhaps his cut wasn't enough, perhaps the budget was too low, perhaps the first true 32X platformer was not prestigious enough, but somehow Sonic slipped through.

There is, however, much to redress his absence. If the star turn has had a wobbly, Sega have set out to prove that the wonderful world of mammilia provides enough replacement characters, with a Take That fivesome of super-powered hopefuls. Gary's equivalent would be Espio — not tops in the the look department, but spintastic in action. Robbie would have to be the snappy Vector, with his cheeky grin and k-k-krazy hit parade antics. Jason has to be the nononsense Knuckles, as they both share brute strength and flying abilities, and Mark and the petite Charmy Bee are often mistaken for each other in the Ladybird clothes section of Woolworths. Finally, this Mighty armadillo geezer and Howard share lot in common (?). Exactly, see ya Howard, See ya later!









TAKE THAT AND PARTY!

After playing Chaotix, you'll know each contour of these five guys, and what they're best at — intimately:

KNUCKLES



Indisputably the team leading Echidna, with his previous game experience. Knuckles has the benefit of a superspin attack, plus the power to glide in mid-air and scale walls.

ESPIO



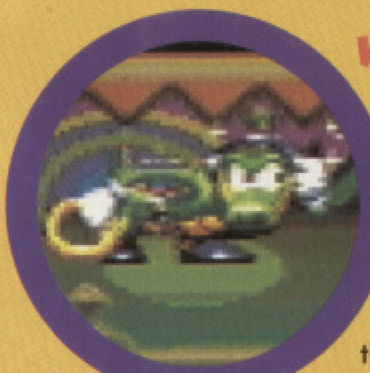
The chameleon takes second billing. He has dizzying spin powers, which give him massive height when thrown upwards. He also takes wall climbing at running pace!

MIGHTY



First armadillo showing, and looking suspiciously like the Blue One. Boring in our estimation, with no mates.

VECTOR

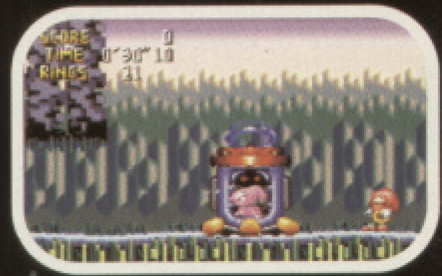


Irritating reptilian type, who compensates with an amazing turn of speed, and a spiny spin.

CHARMY BEE



Tiny and unassuming, but remarkably well endowed. As Charmy has the power to fly, he can pull his partners out of most kinds of trouble. Perhaps too useful.





▲ *As a result of 'Botnik's trikcery, Knuckles find himself mexhanically attached.*

...UNTIL YOU GET IT RIGHT

You're all pretty cocksure of yourselves when it comes to controlling games, especially platformers, so what will the 32X-owning public make of the demo mode. For any newly started games (not saved positions) the player must endure a five-part tutorial mode, then a four-stage introductory level 'Isolated Island'. To its credit, the demo is well put together, with each control combination shown to the player, who is invited to follow the text instructions, then finally try it on their own. Each stage of Isolated Island is free of enemies, giving new players the chance to adapt to the terrain.

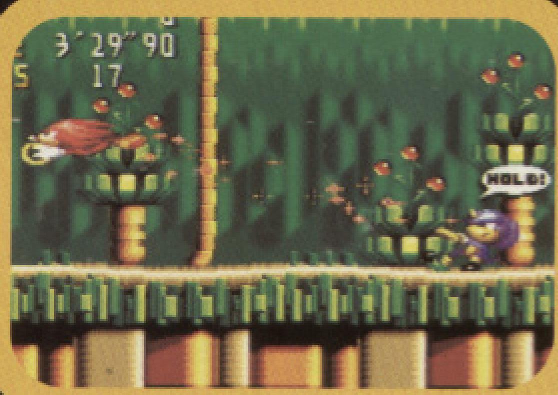




THE TENSION INSIDE THE SWEETNESS

Chaotix seems to have been constructed around the bizarre control method. Instead of controlling one character, you have two, bound by an unbreakable elastic chain. Directly, you control one of these characters, much like a normal platform game. But the link affects the physics of all your movements — running acceleration is slowed down, falling acceleration is increased. It also means that you have two potentially vulnerable characters (though only the main one can lose a substantial amount of rings).

But while the link makes things tricky, it also offers benefits once you learn to appreciate the 'feel' of the gameplay. The secondary character may be anchored, and the main character stretched away to create a high-tension spring. When released this produces Sonic-style superspeeds. More sophisticated catapult manoeuvres are possible, with the main character spinning past the anchor character and dragging him along. The main character can also grasp his anchorman and throw him to higher platforms, grappling-hook style, making it the most versatile control system yet.

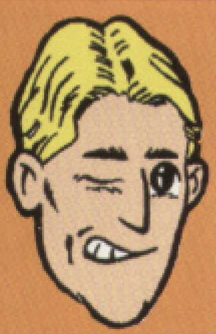








COMMENT



PAUL

Whilst Chaotix looks every bit the 32bit game, with loads of sprite expansion and night and day effects, something seems to be missing from the gameplay. I spent ages ambling through each of the levels, waiting for things to hot up, but they never did. Chaotix seems remarkably short of enemy sprites, and these tend to take the urgency out of ring collecting. Everything else in the game is fine, and you really couldn't ask for a nicer-looking Sonic-style game, but the lack of excitement put a real damper on it for me. Surely it wouldn't have taken that much to lob a handful of extra Badniks into the mix? Because without them, this is just not half the game it could have been.

WORLDS APART

Knuckles and his mates find themselves returning to the same worlds, time and time again. Preceding each stage is the 'ante world', a strange corridor decorated in tasteless 70's kitsch, which ends with a level select lottery. Five vignettes of the worlds are lit in random sequence, with a plunger selecting the next battlezone. When all five stages of a world are complete, a number appears in that window. Each stage of each world has a different decor, representing zones of the day from dawn to night:

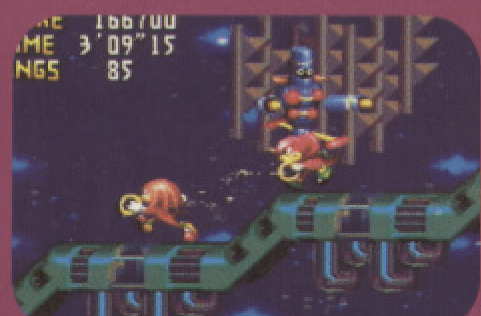
BOTANIC BASE

Five foliatory bowers of florally-generated antagonism. Amidst the running streams and fountains lurk bushy denizens, cyborg caterpillars and spruce-spines of doom. Blast doors warp you to cave-like sections inside the Botanic Base



TECHNO TOWER

The hi-tech zone built in a series of dizzying vertical climbs. Much steel framework in evidence, conveyor belts with directional switches and enemies to match the air of Industria, with mult-legged fliers and bombing baddies.





SUB-EDITING
Sub games, having become a tradition for games of this type, are represented by the following two contestants on Sub-game for Europe

FALLING IN LOVE
This is the Sam Fox sub-game: big, bouncy but not overly satisfying. Secret ring locations mid-level will warp the characters to a bottomless pit with psychedelic notions. Strips of rings fly out towards you, along with a series of multi-coloured tiles. The only thing to avoid are the exit tiles, which end the plummeting session with a jolt. Best to stay and mop up the points bonuses and special icons.

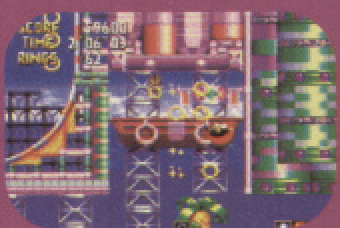


BEST OF THE TUBE



This is Johnny Logan sub-game: a frequent and critically lauded participant. At the end of the level, if the character has enough rings, a giant ring-piece makes an appearance, ready to whisk you off to a giant polygon tube. The object here is similar to the 3-D sub-game of Sonic 2. This time its blue spheres to be collected, whilst large holes in the floor and mines need to be avoided. Characters have freedom to jump from surface to surface, rotating the tube in a very 32-xy fashion. The reward —a juicy chaos ring. We like.

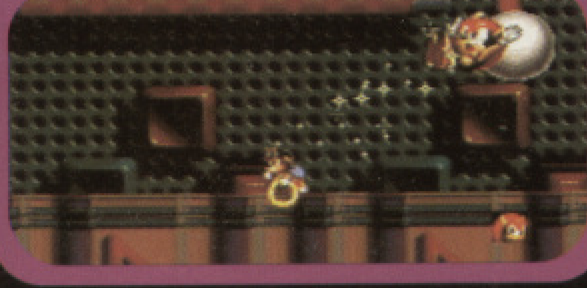
MARINA MADNESS
Things get piscular, set against the kind of yacht Cap'n Bob Maxwell tripped off. Dangers of equal peril await, with fruits of the sea kitted out bionically for battle. However, raising the tide lets you access areas otherwise out of bounds.



SPEED FLYER
Unadulterated fastness for the twin-engined fighting force. Echoes the Carnival zone of Sonic 3 with balloon platforms, mechanised platforms and japerish denizens of of all kinds.



AMAZING ARENA
The arena undergoes a miraculous transformation when you find the clock and start the timer. Time themes the area, with pendulous enemies, clockwork mechanisms set against a series of lurid backdrops.



COMMENT



GUS

This most interesting thing about Chaotix is its philosophical connotations: Is it a Sonic game without Sonic? Cognisance — what makes us recognise a thing as one thing and not another? In every respect except the animal itself, Chaotix looks like a Sonic game. The graphics are very good: in the familiar Moebius vein, but with lots of 32X touches on colouring and parallax, and the character animation is superb. Special mention has to be made of the polygon sub-game, which is just the fabbest part of the whole endeavour. The rest of the game hinges on the success or failure of the control mode. It's a bizarre feeling, and occasionally very frustrating when the pairings spin out of control, but ultimately the Chaotix experiment has been successful in that sense. Unfortunately the game's weakness seems to have been a tendency to simplify the levels to compensate for the tricky control. There are just not enough baddies or challenges to put this on a par with Sonic 2, 3 or Sonic and Knuckles. The Robotnik incarnations are especially weak (in all senses). Approaching it from a different angle, the main challenge of Chaotix is to scoop up points, and there the potential for continual improvement is immense. The second fundamental weakness is a lack of variety between the worlds in anything beyond graphics. It's all lifts, loops and platforms, just styled differently. These minus points make Chaotix the perfect kids' game, as it looks and sounds fab, but one too assailable for players hardened to the excesses of previous platformers.

KEEPING TABS



Bits and pieces turn up in iconic form throughout. Some have effects on the character, where others fulfil their usefulness later in the ante room. The in-game icons are held in the familiar Sonic monitors. Their effects work on the character who activated them:





BIG
Bloats one character into a towering personage, and enhances jumping and throwing powers in doing so.



SMALL
Reducto ad absurdum. Being this small prevents you doing anything particularly well.



SWAP
Lead character becomes anchorman, and er, vice versa.

REPLACE
The character on the monitor temporarily fills in for your own.



SHIELD
Same as Sonics past and future.

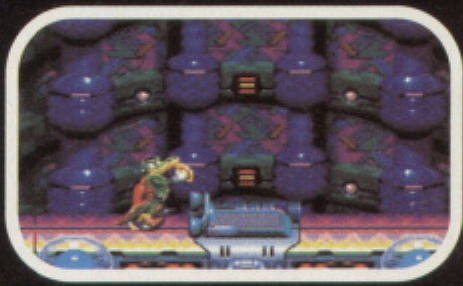
INVINCIBILITY
The blue one has lent his spangly mantle of unassailability.



S-L-O-W
Found on the falling sub-game, this slows down the level roulette to a manageable degree.



GRAB
Found on the falling sub-game, makes the combi-snatcher easier to use.

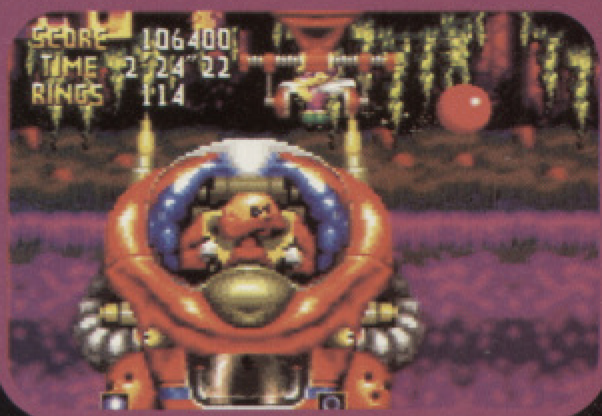


◀ *Step on it.*



DIRTY BOT

Dr Robotnik, arch-super villain appears when you impudently crack the fifth stage of each world. As usual, it's results in a stand-off with an ingenious (but ultimately flawed) piece of demonic machinery which you must dismantle.



▶ *Sneaky rings abound.*



NICE SNATCH

The Combi-Snatcher is a function of the ante-room, allowing the main character to pick a partner through use of a grab machine (like those found in any arcade). The potential ring-mates are on pillars below, and to make things a little tricky, they regularly swap places. The five star characters (apart from the one you are playing) are represented, along with a couple of undesirable playmates: Bomb and Heavy. Little Bomb is actually not too bad, but Heavy is a real drag. You can use the Combi-Snatcher once between levels.



GRAPHICS — 93
▲More colours than are ever wisely assembled in one place, super-smooth, super-detailed action with no loss of speed.

SOUND — 92
▲Better tunes than the last couple of Sonic games, with some out and out stormers.
▼Lift-music survives in some places.

PLAYABILITY — 83
▲The all-new method of control grabs your immediate attention.
▼The levels themselves lack focus and content.

LASTABILITY — 80
▲High scoring is a potentially infinite game challenge
▼Well on the easy side for simple completionists.

VFM — 81
▼There's nothing really unmissable about this game that demands you get it or a 32X.

OVERALL — 84
Bemusing, experimental, fast and cheeky. Make of that what you will Size triumphs over content, but there's a lot in there.


Digital Pictures
Too real to imagine
100% Full Motion Instantly Interactive Video Gaming
lets you...
Slam it with Scottie...
Become the Supreme Warrior...
Be the ultimate Corpse Killer
and
Escape the dangers of Night Trap.
When Movie-makers make games, everything else is just cartoons
MEGADRIVE 32X
Corpse Killer
Night Trap
Supreme Warrior
Slam City
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WORK IN PROGRESS

PRIMAL RAGE



Currently swallowing quids and natives galore, Atari's Primal Rage coin-op has been billed as the reptilian successor to the gory goings-on in Midway's Mortal Kombat series.

Starring seven prehistoric pugilists, Primal Rage offers the player control over a rubber monster Ray Harryhausen (the model-maker in those old Sinbad films — ask yer Dad) would be proud of.The game is set on an Earth cooling after a series of volcanic eruptions, with the seven mighty beasts fighting it out for global domination. Each creature currently governs a continent, within which they are worshipped by a selection of barely-evolved humans. Having chosen your monster, the basic aim of the game is to defeat all six of your opponents and gain worldwide domination and adulation from the little people.

Time Warner are the people with the rights to convert the Atari coin-op to the many home formats, and in the first of this two-part Work In Progress, we'll be going behind the scenes of the coin-op and the forthcoming Megadrive game. Next month we'll be taking a deeper look at the game itself and unveil the first pictures of the supposedly arcade-perfect Saturn version.

I LIKE TO MOVE IT

Primal Rage evolved from an idea two Atari developers had over two years ago which was provisionally called Tyrannosaurus Rex. The coders, Dennis Harper and graphic artist Jason Leong, had been tinkering with the idea of using stop-motion animation as a basis for a game's graphics for ages, but the initial tests had proved better than they had imagined, and the basic idea was fleshed out to include a mixture of dinosaurs and apes. When designing the monsters, Harper and Leong used what they considered to be the strongest elements from real dinosaurs and present-day animals, with the Armadon a mixture of Triceratops, Ankylosaurus and Stegosaurus, whilst others mix reptile bodies with the attributes of Cobras and Tigers.

The puppets were moulded from rubber and positioned on flexible metal skeleton which allowed movement of every limb. Thirty people oversaw the filming, and Pete Kleinow, the stop-motion artist responsible for Army Of Darkness, was drafted in to oversee the model filming. The filming was a long and arduous process, and whilst the individual movements were being recorded on a Silicon Graphics system, a team of computer artists were busy creating additional effects, including blood splats and backdrops. The overall process from start to finish took two years or solid work, and the machine's popularity has already spawned a sequel which is currently in the works.



▲ *Tired of being prodded , Blizzard ate the guy with the knife (not pictured).*





MONSTER MASH

Primal Rage made its first public debut at the June CES show in Chicago. A one-on-one beat 'em up, the coin-op differed from rivals such as Mortal Kombat and Street Fighter in that the sprites the player controlled were towering dinosaurs and primates as opposed to the humanoid combatants arcade-goers had become accustomed to. However, in another step above the normal arcade fare, the dinosaurs were digitised renditions of stop-motion animated models, and consequently required three times more animation than the likes of Baraka and Cammy. For those yet to see the coin-op, Primal Rage pits five dinosaurs and two apes against each other in a series of three-round contests. The basic aim of the game is to punch, kick and special move the crap out of your opponent, before humiliating them further with an optional fatality. During the course of these bouts, though, countless extras have been added, with tiny native sprites running about who can be eaten for extra energy, incredible combos, and hidden special moves and sub-games. The coin-op officially went into mass production in early 1994, and has since become the highest-selling cabinet of all time. Coo.



▲ *Look! Look! Gen-u-ine Megadrive Primal pics! Wow!*





PROJECT
PRIMAL RAGE

PUBLISHER
TIME WARNER

INITIATED
DECEMBER'94

RELEASE
SEPTEMBER '95

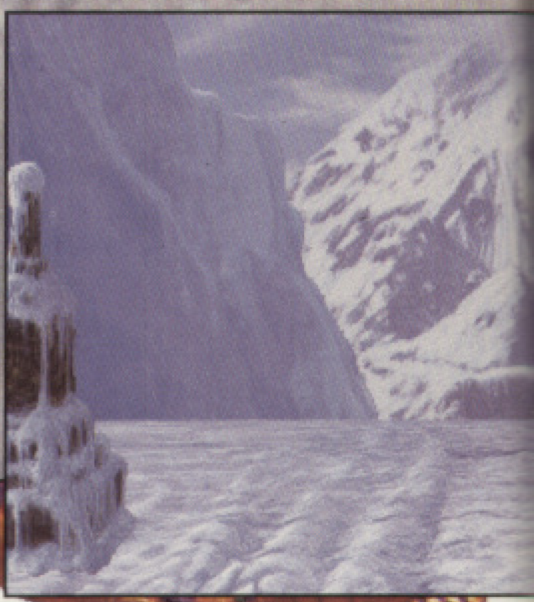
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

DEVELOPERS
PROBE





PRIMAL RAGE





QUART INTO PINT POT

To say that Primal is a memory-intensive coin-op is a bit like saying drinking from a boiling kettle would hurt a bit (and, no, don't try it. It's a stupid thing to do). Each arcade character uses over 900 frames of animation (30 are used for the starting pose alone), and obviously cramming all this into the Megadrive is going to be virtually impossible. As such, when Time Warner acquired the rights, they turned to the experienced hands at Probe to cram this arcade quart into the 16bit pint pot. The team responsible for the Megadrive, 32X, Saturn and Game Gear versions of Primal are the same guys behind Acclaim's excellent MKII conversions, and the same coding techniques are being used to cram it into a 24MEG Megadrive cart.

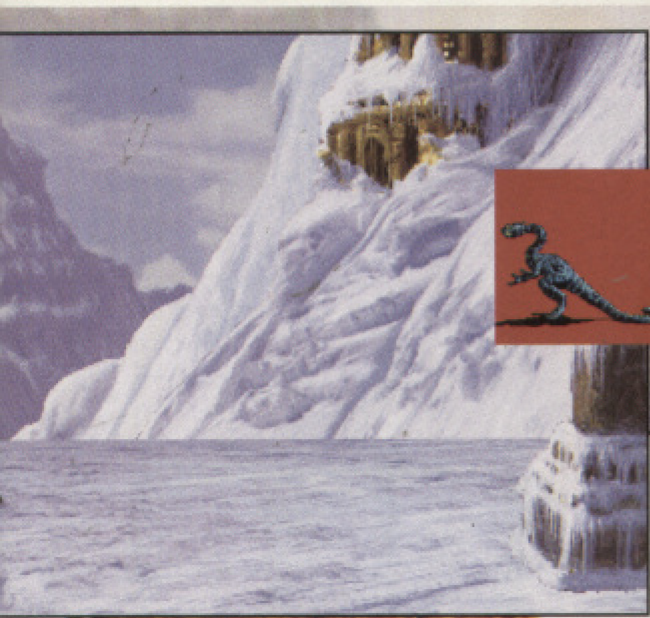


CUTTING BACK

Obviously, if Probe were to convert Primal to the Megadrive, something would have to give. The programmers were keen, however, to retain as much of the game code as possible and, to their credit, every special move, native and finishing move has survived the transition intact. Instead, to keep the game playing as fast as the coin-op, small snips have been to remove unnecessary animations here and there. With the Sauron sprite alone using 943 frames for all his moves, there was no feasible way the Megadrive (let alone the Game Gear) could handle that many. As such, the graphic artist has reduced the number of frames to the 180 region, and whilst this sounds like a severe cut, the result is still very impressive with the dinos and apes still behaving like their coin-op cousins.









▲ A smattering of arcade shots for your delectation. Just so you can, like, compare them to the Megadrive ones.

PORT LIFE

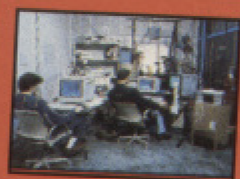
The first stage in recreating a coin-op on the Megadrive or any other system is to port the graphic files over to a PC-based development system. To this end, the Atari programmers have been extremely helpful, supplying Probe with all the sprites, backdrops and sound effects on separate discs. From these, the original 64-colour coin-op sprites are redrawn in the eight-colour form they'll appear in the final game, whilst the backdrops are similarly recoloured, or redrawn if necessary. The sound is then downloaded into a MIDI set-up where the samples are compressed, and the music recreated to play within the Megadrive's three-channel capabilities. Unbelievably for a game using such large sprites and featuring so many moves, it is the sound which causes programmers the most headaches, with samples requiring oodles of memory if they are to be clear and recognisable. At present, Megadrive Primal weighs in at a hefty 32MEG with one character — Armadon — still to be incorporated, but Probe are confident they'll have him in for their June coding deadline.



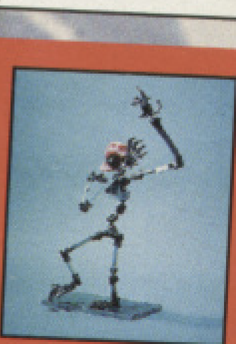








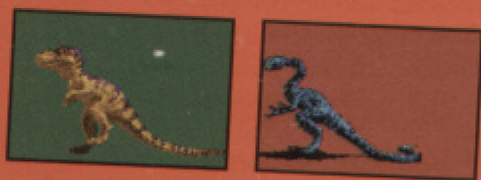
▲ The Primal Rage cave where the monsters live.



▲ John Travolta in Pulp Fiction.

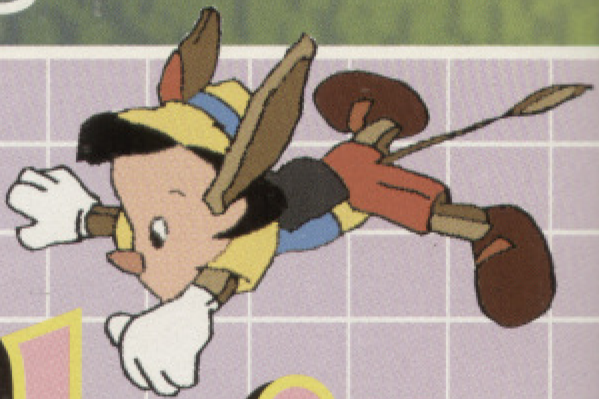


▲ Probe's rendition of the mountain backdrop seen up the top there.



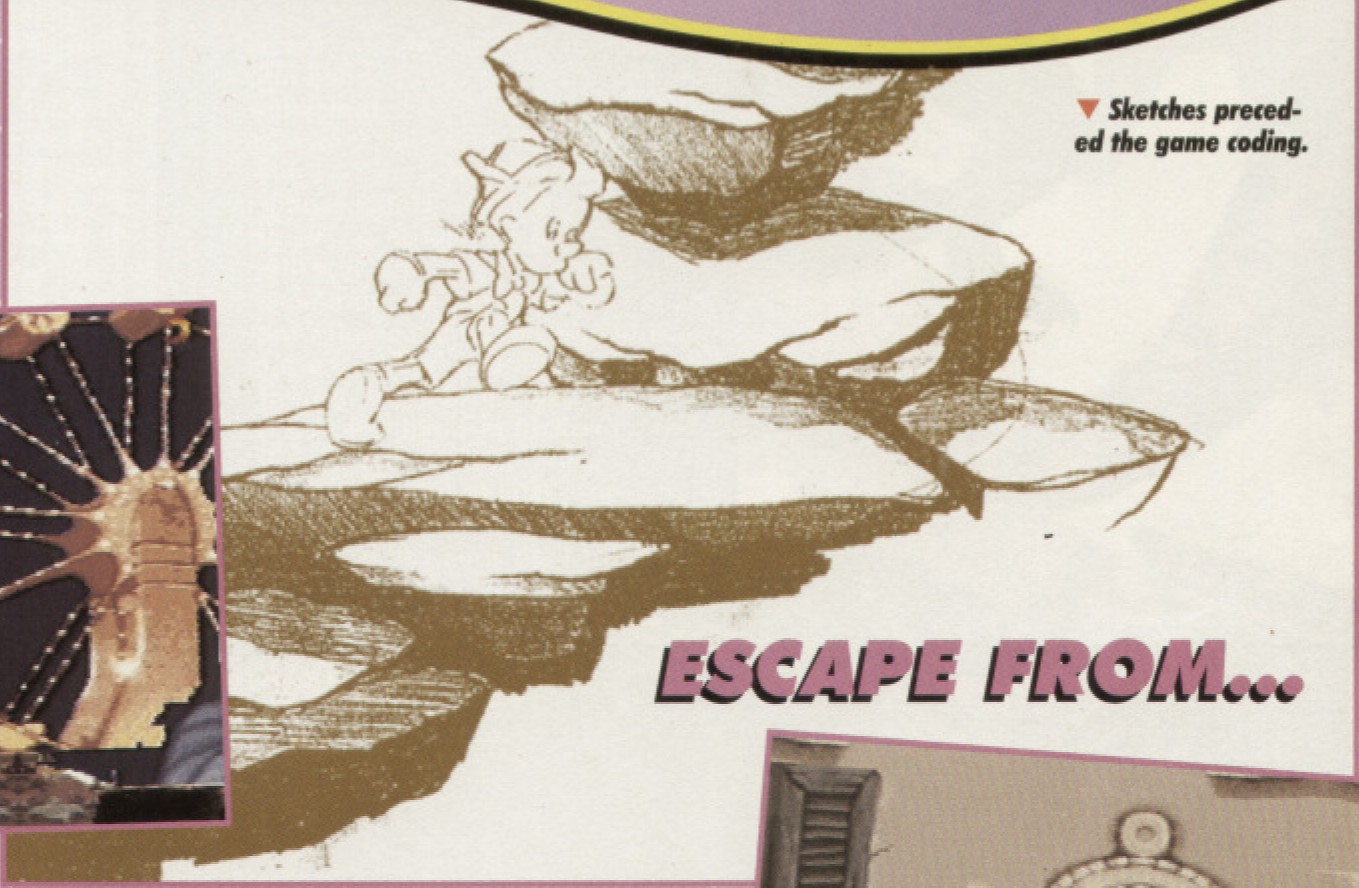
▲ An example of the Megadrive dinosaur sprites.





Pinocchio

Just what are little boys are made of? Frogs, snails and jackasses' tails? Gus goes to Virgin's Ladbroke Grove nursery, where the in-house team are nurturing a very special little lad.



▼ *Sketches preceded the game coding.*

ESCAPE FROM...









'Classic' is an overused epithet for movies. It equates to boring 30's movies shown on BBC 2 on a Saturday afternoon, or anything which has been on sell-through video for a couple of years. But many Disney animated features are worthy of the term classic.
Disney's early features used expensive animation technqiues that eventually proved too expenisve, despite the quality of their results.
Pinocchio was the second original cell feature, a dazzling piece of work that almost bankrupted the studio, and is widely regarded as the best animated film ever. It's a beautiful, beautiful film, both in appearance and structure — with memorable characters, timeless songs, and just a hint of old Uncle Walt's moralising wagging finger. As such it was the natural target for Virgin, who had produced three previous highly successful Megadrive Disney licenses: Aladdin, Jungle Book and The Lion King.
Pinocchio provides as a good a plot for a video game as any other Disney title. It's based on the journeys of a young boy — there's plenty of danger and drama, lessons to be learned and a wonderfully charismatic central character: a magical puppet who wants to be a real boy. It also helps that Disney are planning to release the feature again to buy on video for the first time in a limited edition. Previous releases, including Snow White, Fantasia and Beauty and the Beast have been mega sellers. As this is Virgin's big 16-bit game for Christmas '95, they hope Pinocchio will do the same.

TAKING THE MICKEY

The game's two project coordinators, Dan Marchant and Tony Fagelman talked freely about Disney's close involvement in the project. In common with their other licenses, Disney shows an interest approaching obsession in the way the characters are portrayed, their activities as gameplay and incorporating the 'nuances' of the movies into the game. Part of the agreement for the license is that Disney do all the



animations themselves, although Virgin have six ex-Universal animators on their staff. The Virgin graphic artists had prepared 'roughs' from the start of the project, partly to allow the programmers to construct the game around the sprites and partly to indicate to Disney what they wanted. All of these are sent to artists at Disneyworld, Florida, who then reinterpret them. Tony admits it is sometimes an exasperating and disheartening process to see radical changes to their own work . To enhance the process, Virgin developed their own animation player which loads the animations from PC, allowing them to be seen against the backgrounds that will be used in the game.



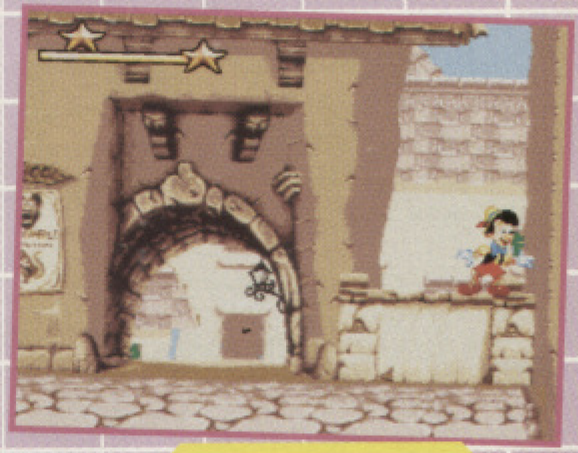
▼ *Virgin sketch of typical background of the first level. Compare with the rendered screenshot.*



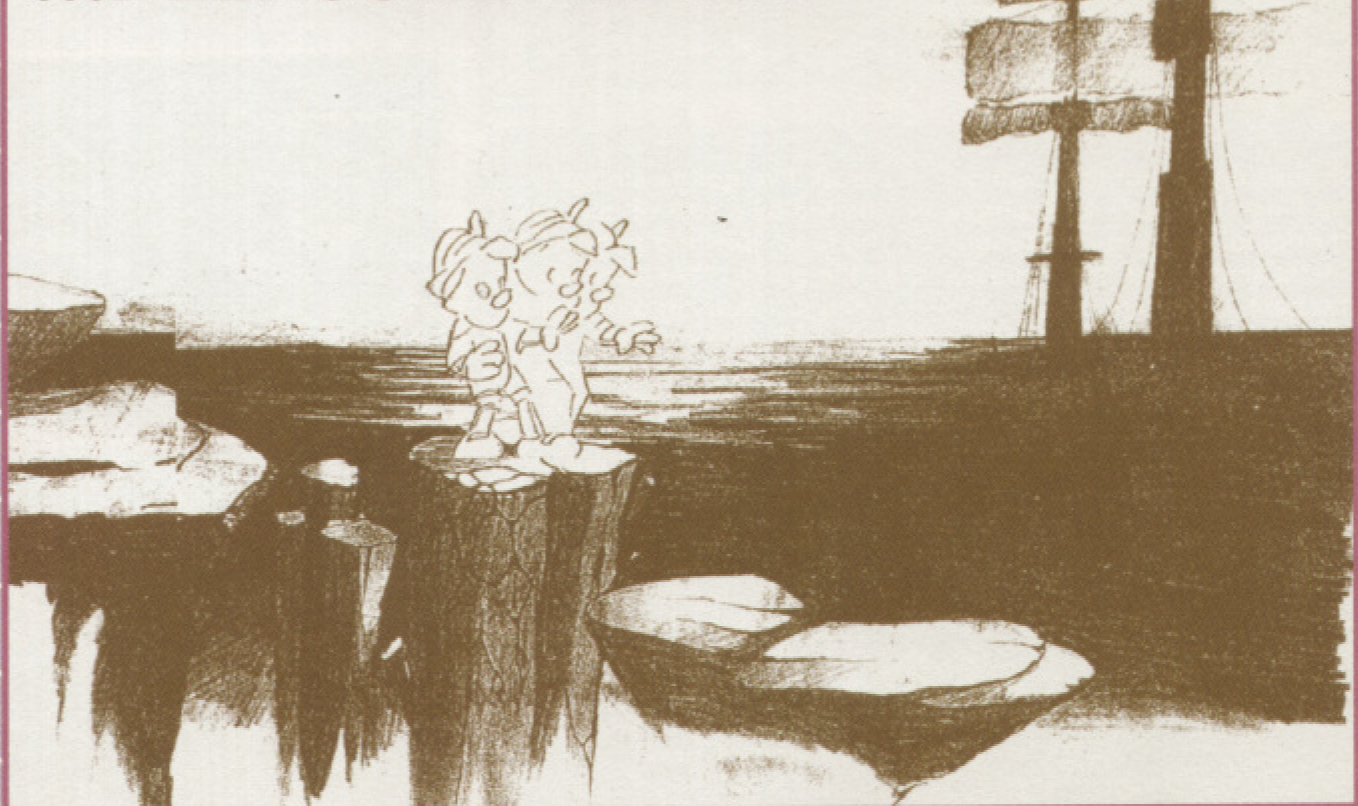
GOING TO SCHOOL

SHRINK TO FIT

The needs of the animators and programmers must be balanced. In a video game, the amount of memory allocated to animations is restricted. Pinocchio will have around 2000 frames — a lot by Megadrive standards, but even that could have been easily consumed by Disney's specs for the main character alone. The game has 31 characters to fit in the allocation, more than twice the amount in Lion King, with Pinocchio himself taking more than a quarter of all frames. Frames are traced on animation paper, digitised



...PLEASURE ISLAND



PROJECT
PINOCCHIO

PUBLISHER
VIRGIN

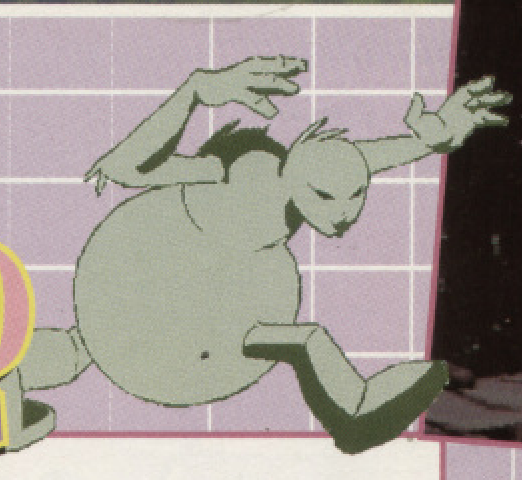
INITIATED
JUNE'94

RELEASE
SEPT'95

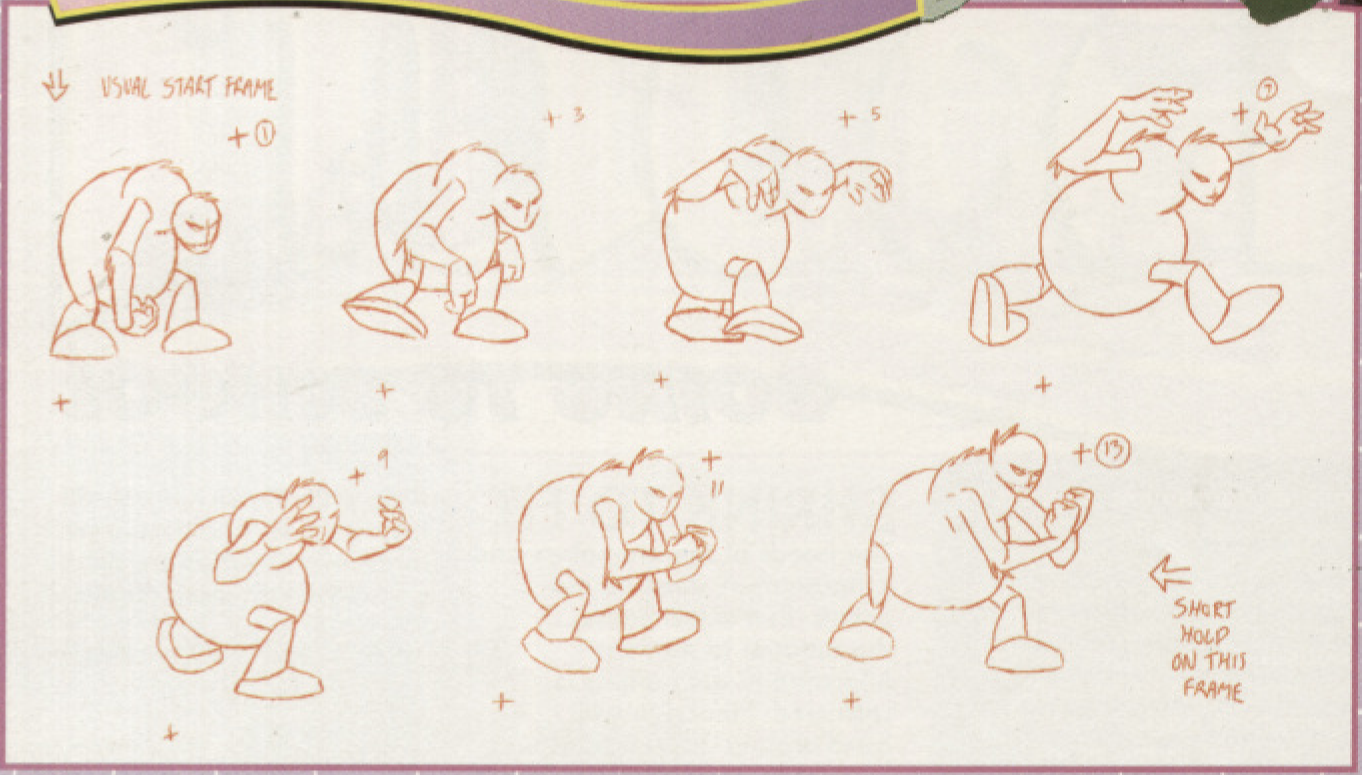
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE, 32X

DEVELOPERS
VIRGIN (LONDON)

Pinocchio



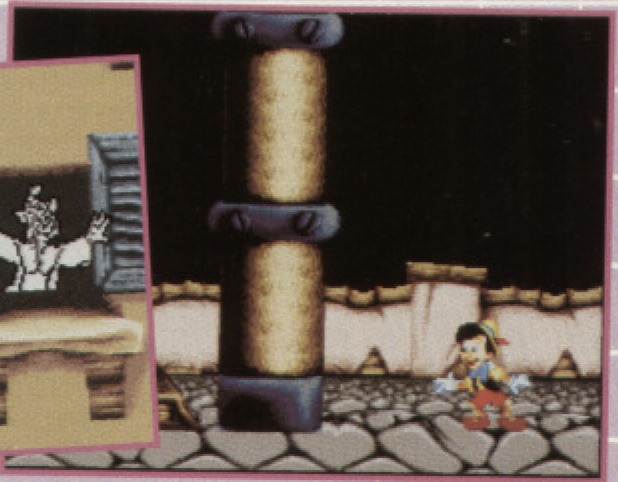




▲ ***Virgin's own slightly-less-than-Disney animation ideas for the Shadow creatures.***

and coloured on computer then reprinted. The final sprite designs are then rendered by Virgin programmers. The attention to detail is tremendous. One example is Pinocchio's run. When the game opens he skips lightly, but as the plot places him in peril, new animations show his change in mood.



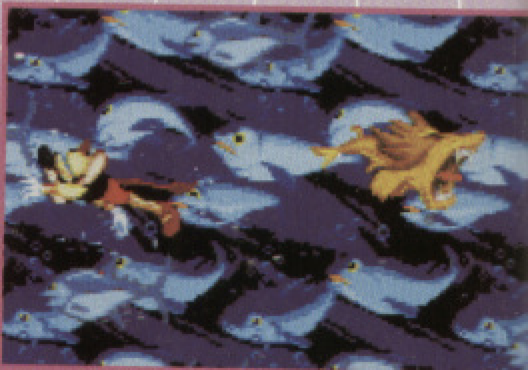


MAGIC OF CINEMA

"They know how to make a great movie" states Dan, "but we have the experience with games. Nevertheless, the Pinocchio property is one of Disney's most precious, and linking the game with as many elements of the movie is a priority. This is perhaps refreshing when considering the amount of past movie licensed games of all types which have had very tenuous links with the action of their movie counterpart.

Disney's interest has justifications. One of their staff sitting in on discussions was the animator for Jiminy Cricket in the movie, his first ever animation job! The movie has offered some inspirations of its own. One is the Shadow Creatures. These appear in the stage where Pinocchio is attempting to flee Pleasure Island as all the young boys are turned to donkeys. In a brief sequence of the movie he is seen fleeing from shadowy lumbering figures, representing his own fear. "When we saw them, we wanted them in, " recounts Dan.





DAVE AND THE MECHANICS

The 24 strong Pinocchio team are quick to stress that this is not a 'Dave Perry' game. Pinocchio has been designed from the 'ground up'. Apart from an all-new engine, the game design aims to set it apart from production line platformers. As Dan explains, each level of the game is designed to have a point or task, rather than just a start and exit point. The player is given choices, sometimes not obvious ones, that fit in with the Pinocchio story An example of original thinking is the marionette show level. It's a classic moment in the film, as Pinocchio launches into a production number of 'I've got no strings' abetted by a cast of puppets. The team just had to have it in the game. "We wanted to avoid just making a platform level with a stage background, as the stage is obviously small and it wouldn't make sense", recounts Dan. What developed was a dancing competition.

In other areas of the game, Pinocchio swims, balloons and rides a rollercoaster. And the player even gets a chance to control Jiminy Cricket.





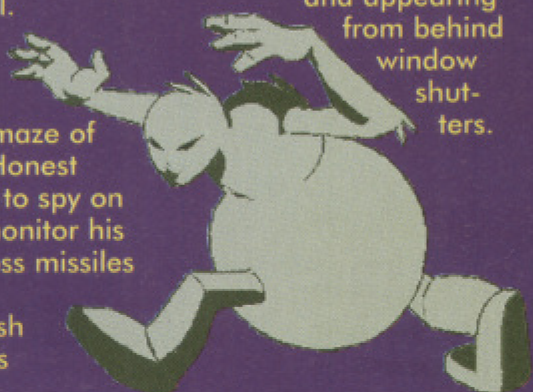
"It's almost like Walt foresaw the concept of video games, as these guys are perfect. Although the only appear for seconds in the movie, they work really well in the game, melting in and out of the shadows trying to clobber Pinocchio".



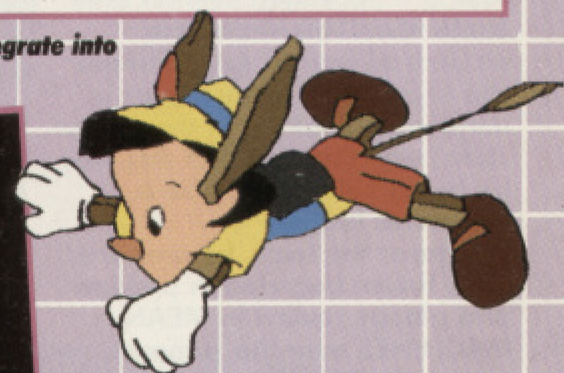
I'VE GOT NO STRINGS

▲ ***The puupet show proved difficult to integrate into a normal platform game.***

I watched as the team demonstrated the Shadow Creatures Artificial Intelligence. They sense Pinocchio and follow him around the play area. Other creatures exhibit a fair level of intelligence, in an effort to make them like their screen counterparts. The first you encounter are Honest John and Gideon, who you may remember as the sly fox and dippy cat who attempt to entice Pinocchio away from school.
In the game they wander around the first level, actually a maze of parallel streets. Honest John is designed to spy on Pinocchio, and monitor his progress. He'll toss missiles over walls and attempt to ambush Pinocchio with his walking stick as he passes. Gideon, by contrast capers about madcap, zipping from place to place and appearing from behind window shutters.







CONSOLE YOURSELF

There will not, sadly, be a Saturn version of Pinocchio. This is due to legal rights and other boring matters. Basically Disney want to keep the rights to the 'super' consoles for themselves, as they ramp up production of video games from their own in-house development team. Their first project is a game of Pocahontas, the story of the Indian girl, which opens in American cinemas this Spring.
The good news is that an enhanced 32X version of Pinocchio is underway. The hardware allows for extra layers of parallax scrolling and double the amount of colours, improved samples and static screens. However, massive changes in game design and levels are not expected.
Although the Megadrive version has an eight month start, Virgin are still reasonably confident of a simultaneous release of 16 and 32 bit formats.



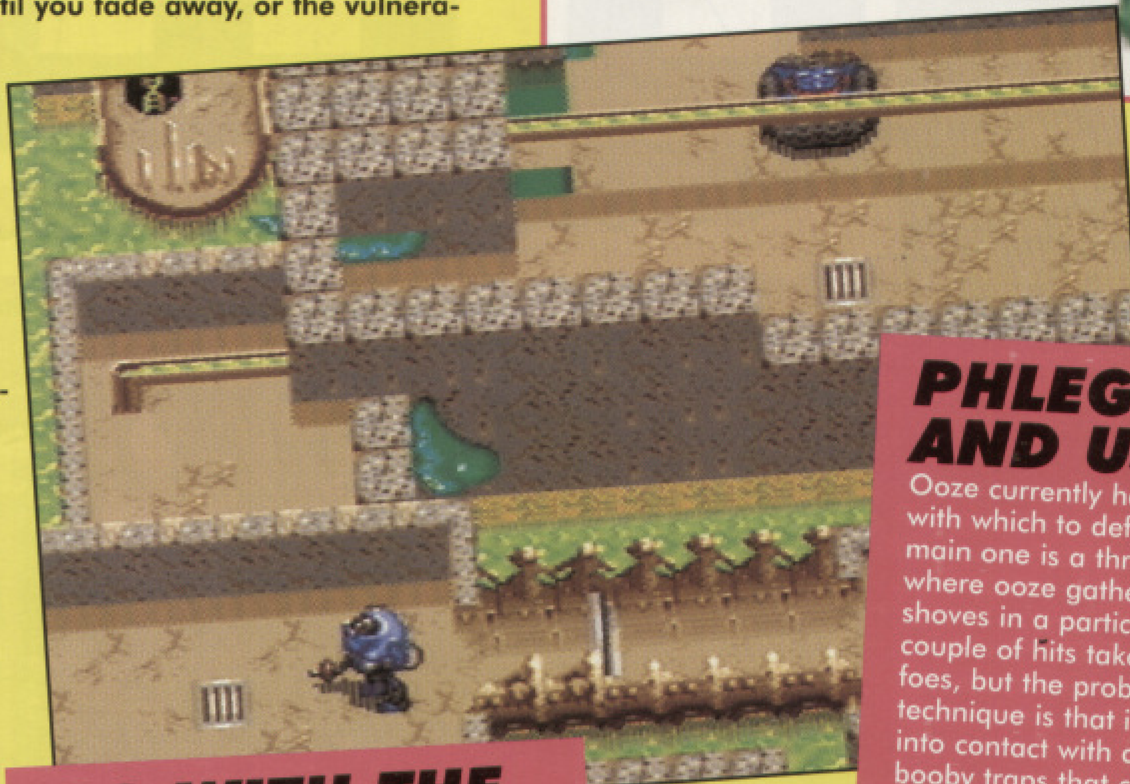
▼ ***The beginnings of the eye-catching fish level.***

STEPPING FISH



When it comes to new Megadrive games, Sega usually have something lurking under the rim. Gus went there to see Ooze taking shape.

The term 'slimeball' is usually a term of abuse, but in Sega's quest to bring the most unlikely characters to the Megadrive, it best describes their latest hero. The Ooze is based on a strange gloopy film (as in oily covering, not motion picture) that wanders round a series of toxic levels, gobbling, gobbing, scowling and howling.
The story behind this blobular exploration game centres on a screwy scientists whose experiments lead him to be turned into an unfortunate slimy lump. The main game aim is to reverse this situation, by reaching the lab at the game's furthest levels. However, other scientists, of the dastardly persuasion are determined to wipe you out — or up, as the case may be.
Viewed from an overhead perspective, the game features an innovative control system and a pretty novel approach to gameplay. The joypad controls the Ooze itself, centred on a head that rises in and out of the gloop, but the rest of the oozing mass flows with it in a fluid and unpredictable fashion. There is also a different approach to lives and energy. Instead of taking damage, your ooze gradually shrinks in size until you fade away, or the vulnerable head takes a hit.
Ooze has been kept rather secret up to now, first showing its head at last month's ECTS. Though the game was originally scheduled for a June release, indications are that you won't be seeing a packaged version until September. This shows the amount of further development still to be done (please bear in mind when looking at the screenshots) and that fact that this may be being held back to be a Christmas biggie.
Whatever the facts, be prepared for a future bog-ridden preview and gloopy review in MEAN MACHINES over the summer.



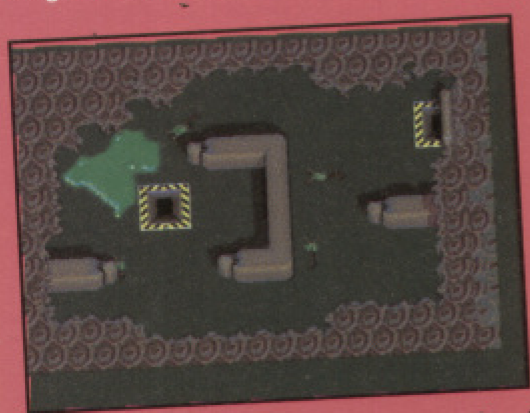
▲ Pssst. You really smell. Pwoaarr.



PROJECT
THE OOZE
PUBLISHER
SEGA
INITIATED
OCTOBER '94
RELEASE
SEPTEMBER '95
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE
DEVELOPERS
SEGA

GO WITH THE FLOW

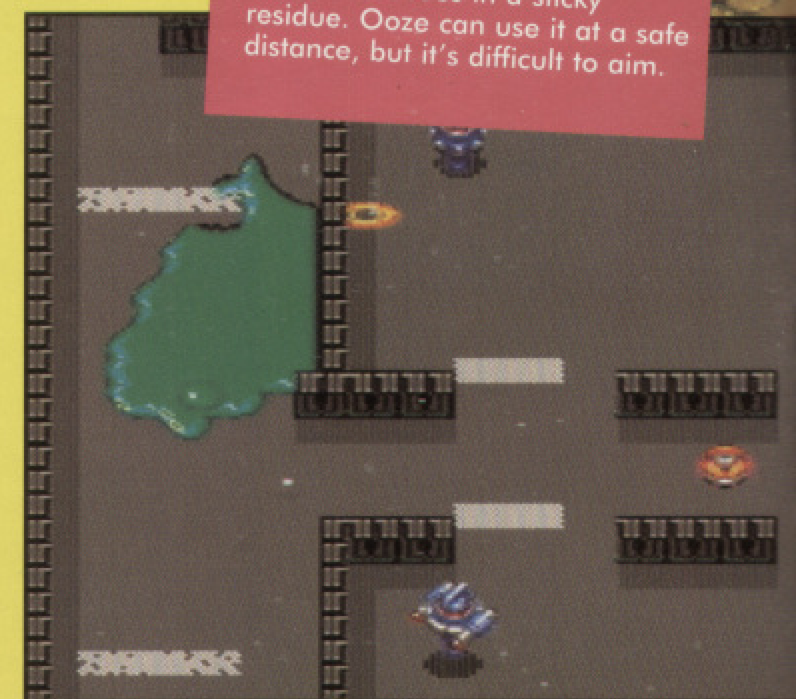
Here's a sneaky look at one of Ooze bonus levels, which we discovered for the first time on our visit. Various arenas allow Ooze to rack up points and regain some body bulk, just by splatting the various insects.



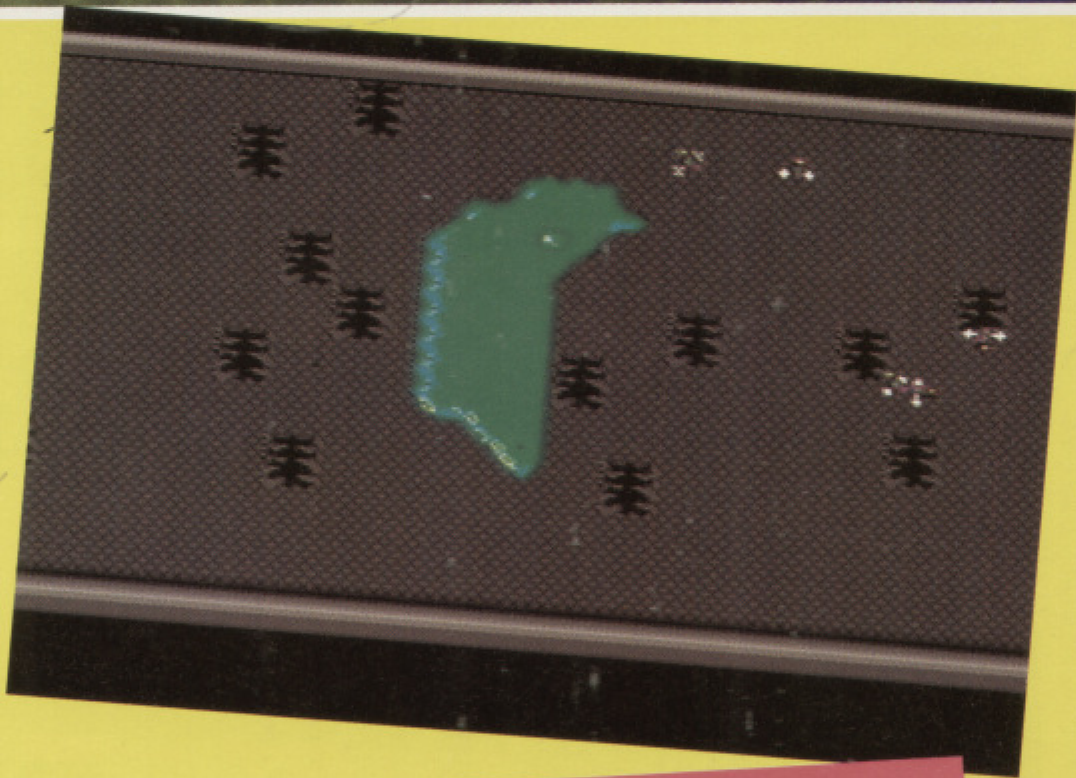
▲ Boy, I hope the game platys better than it looks. That thing in the middle looks like a bent pencil. Still, perhaps it is.

PHLEGM AND US

Ooze currently has two powers with which to defend himself. The main one is a thrust attack, where ooze gathers himself and shoves in a particular direction. A couple of hits takes out most foes, but the problem with this technique is that it brings him into contact with certain foes or booby traps that can damage him. An alternative, but trickier option is his gobbing attack, which coats foes in a sticky residue. Ooze can use it at a safe distance, but it's difficult to aim.



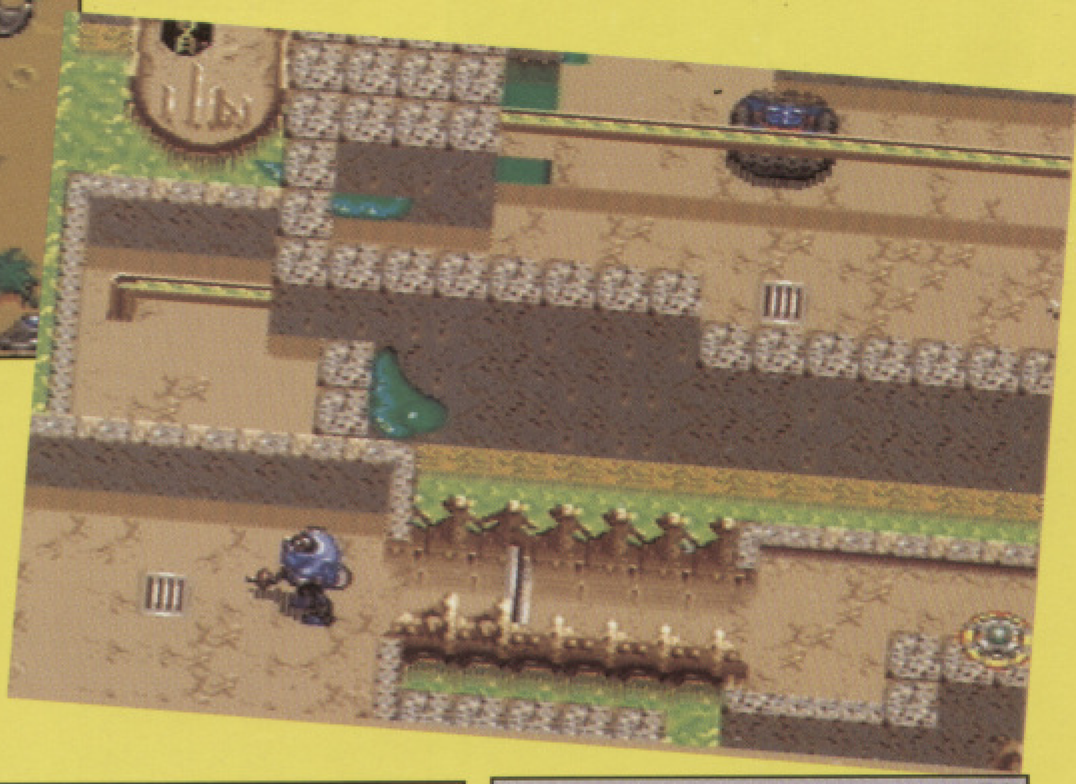


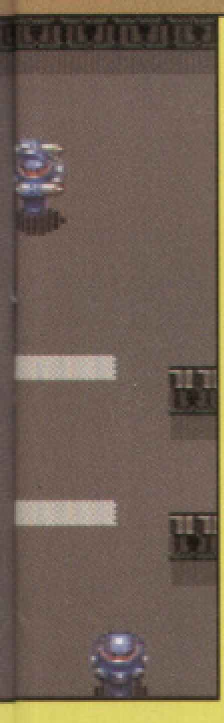


A BOY AND HIS BLOB

Ooze travels between levels from pipe to pipe. At the moment there are five different scenery areas, each split into three zones, with a final boss confrontation in each. The bosses have not yet been fully implemented, so don't look for them here, although they should expand on the game's mutations theme. Within each level, Ooze moves freely and is even designed to flow around certain objects like barrels and pylons. From the two different development carts we've seen, it's clear that making the movement as realistic and fluid as possible has been a major programming task, and that Oozy is looking pretty convincing.



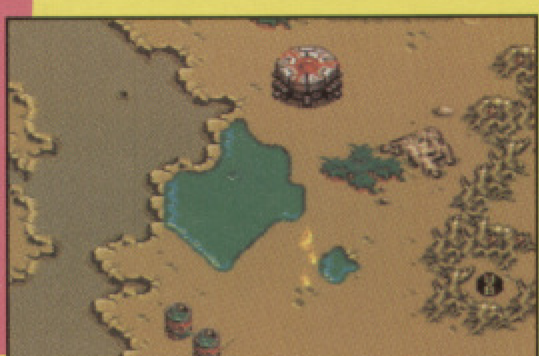




▲ ***This looks really dull. I mean, what is that? Eh! EH!***

THROW A WOBBLY

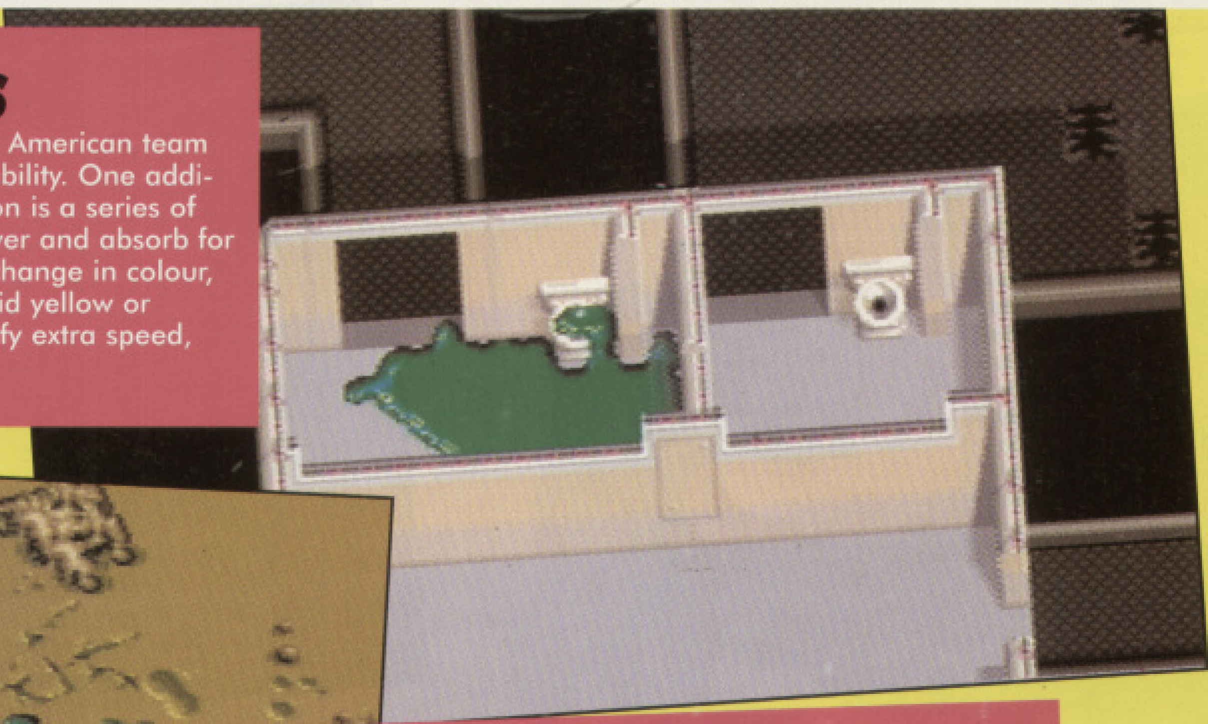
Laid out in a similar fashion to games like Zombies and Chaos Engine, there's a similar puzzle theme in both. Areas of the level are blocked by barriers that need to be removed with the use of keys. Later on, other items may be asborbed to become of use. Humour plays a role to, with Ooze slipping into some public toilets later on, and using the hidden sewage system to flow from one toilet to another.





JELLY FLAVOURS

The graphics are coming on well, but the American team behind Ooze are concentrating on playability. One addition they have made to the earliest version is a series of Oozy icons that the character can flow over and absorb for temporary powers. This is signified by a change in colour, from his normal unhealthy green to a lurid yellow or strange glowing aquamarine. These signify extra speed, power or invincibility.

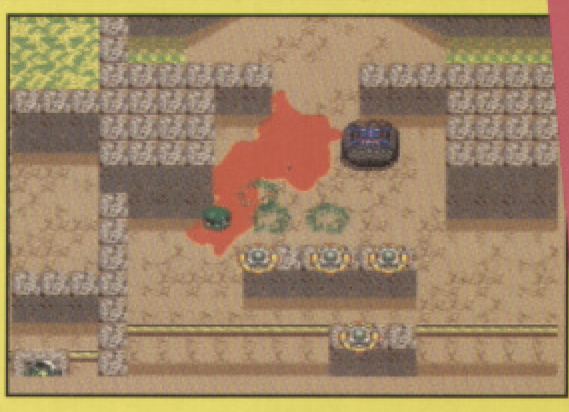


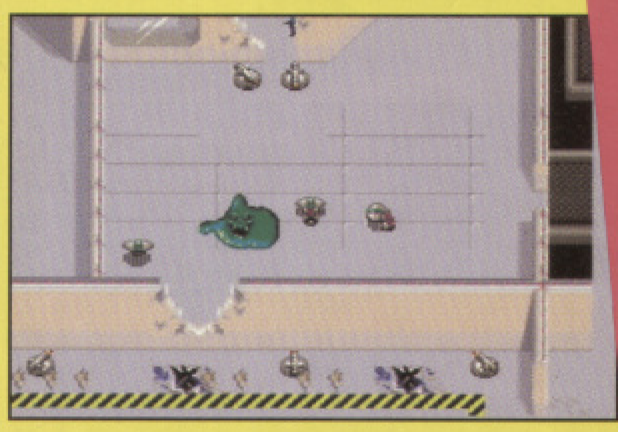


LOSE YOUR MESS

The concept of losing a life has been cleverly explored within Ooze. The initial dollop of slime is vulnerable to all sorts of roving creatures, which rove the levels. Inanimate threats, like toxic waste are also present, and a major danger is flowing into the septic lakes that mark out the early level (which is furthest in development). This first level also features subterrenean foes which burst out of the ground into the ooze. In the first version these looked pretty innocuous, but the second set of ROMS reveal the graphic artists have added some vicious claws which tear into our friendly mutant. One way to replenish your mass is to scoop up the splat that some dead enemies leave behind. It's possible for Ooze to split into pieces, but smart players will quickly scoop themselves up again.

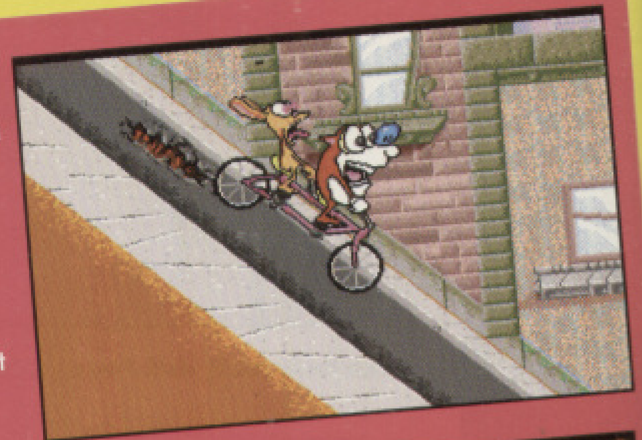






WRETCHING CREW

The unsavoury subject matter of Ooze has been touched upon before in some other Megadrive games. Previous offenders of the Good Taste brigade:



GLOBAL GLADIATORS

It was the Mcdonald's licence that got Dom Diamond in a tizz, not the slime guns and snot monsters.

REN AND STIMPY

Up until now, Sega's best effort in belch and fart playability.

BOOGERMAN

The most serious exploration of bodily functions yet in a video game.

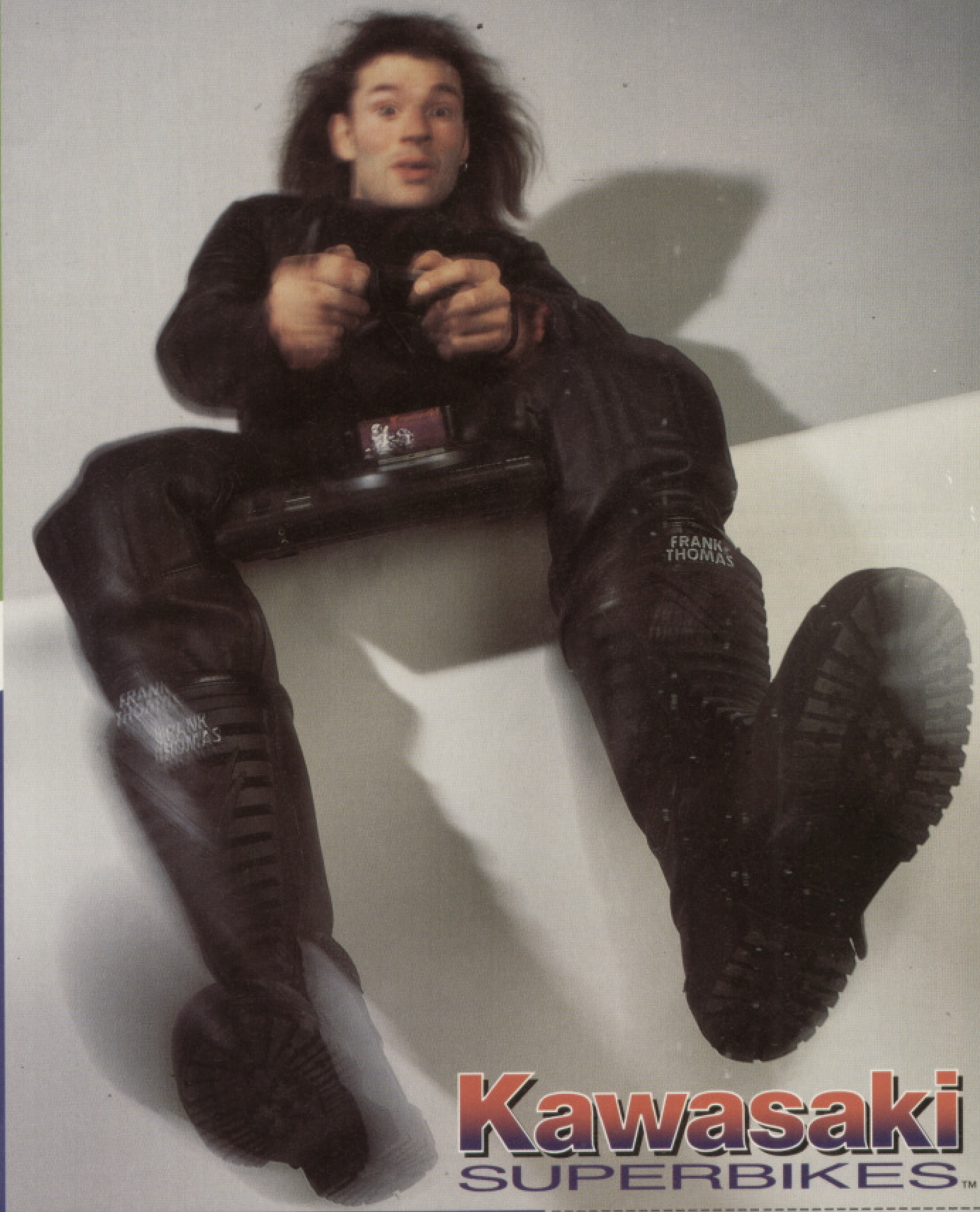


BEAVIS AND BUTTHEAD

A travesty for all kinds of reasons of taste, but not always the intended ones.



FEEL THE THROBBING POWER BETWEEN YOUR LEGS



THE CLOSEST TO RIDING A BIKE ON A CONSOLE.
Sega Magazine, March 1995.

90%
Sega Pro, Easter 1995.

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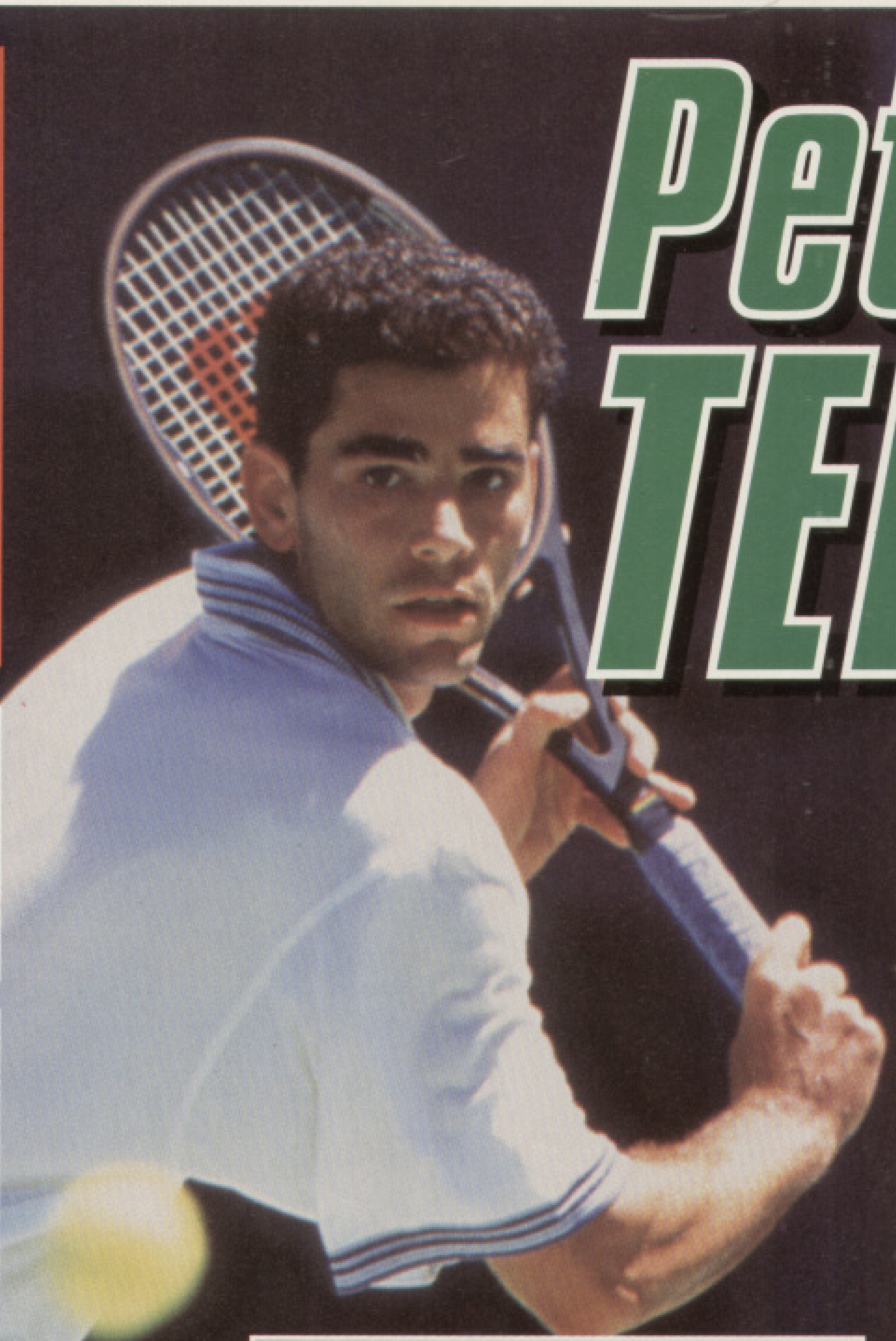
This voucher cannot be used in conjunction with any other voucher but is in addition to any offer currently in store.
Cash value 0.0001p. Valid until 31st May 1995.
Voucher no: FZV068.

Official use only
Transaction no:
Authorisation:
Store: Date:

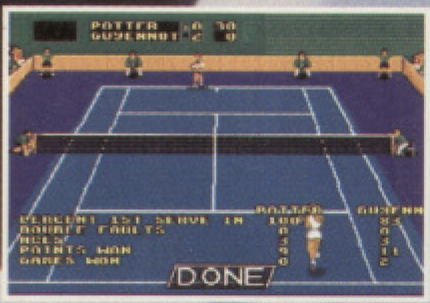
TIME WARNER INTERACTIVE

Pete Sampras TENNIS

How very convenient that Pete Sampras won Wimbledon last year, just as Codemasters launched their summer tennis hit. Could both give a repeat performance in 1995?







▲ *Just like the BBC, all sorts of interesting facts appear at panty-line level.*

PROJECT
SAMPRAS '96

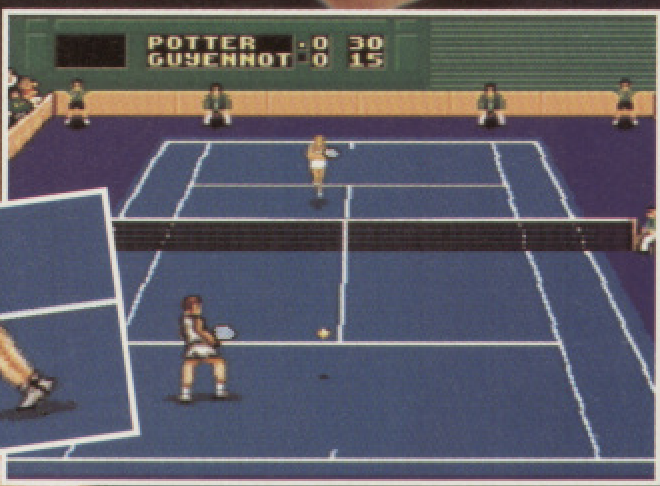
PUBLISHER
CODEMASTERS

INITIATED
JANUARY '95

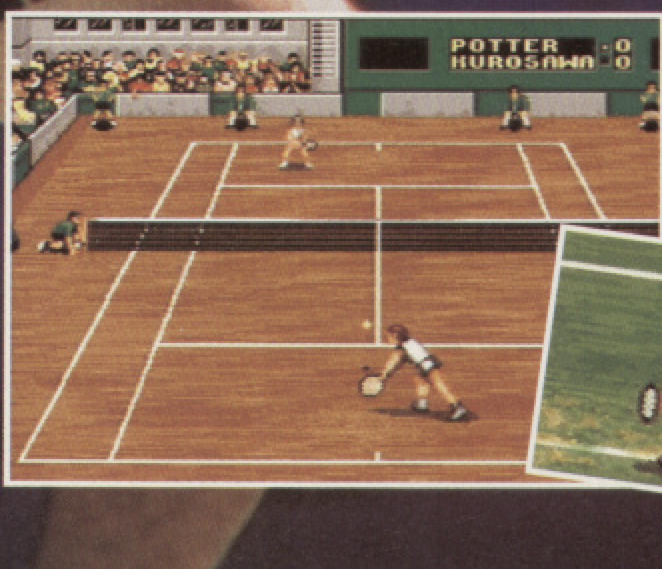
RELEASE
JULY '95

FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

DEVELOPERS
Merit Studios









▲ *Potter takes a quick slash before going for the volley.*

Pete Sampras may indeed be the Tennis equivalent to Steve Davis, and have hair that looks like it belongs in his pants, but he's a top bloke as far as Codemasters are concerned. Their pre-Chrimbo Sampras game is rightfully top of a teetering pile of Sega Tennis sims, and still ranks as a real fave in the MEAN MACHINES office.

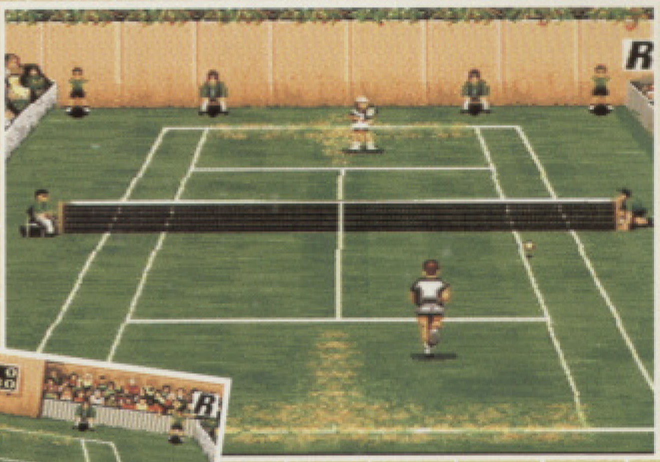
Now, following in the constantly evolving shoes of EA's Sport label, the Codies have taken the best elements of the original Sampras game, thrown a couple of extra aces on to the court, and the result in Sampras '96 — an update which does virtually everything but sort out the man himself's hair. All of the basic playability of the original has been left intact, but more shots have been added to include a smash which is easier to pull of than before and more instinctive dives. Similarly, a coach is now on hand to offer advice, and will replay key scenes from a game and inform you of weaknesses in your game.

The screenshots shown here are from a 60% complete cart, but work is continuing apace to ensure Sampras '96 arrives in the same lorry as Wimbledon's Strawberries and cream delivery. It'll probably be cheaper than a punnet of manky fruit and off milk, too.

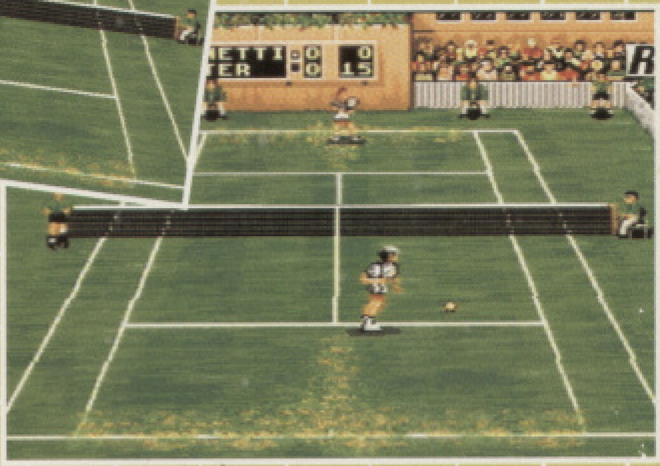
mpras
s '96

UMPIRE BUILDING

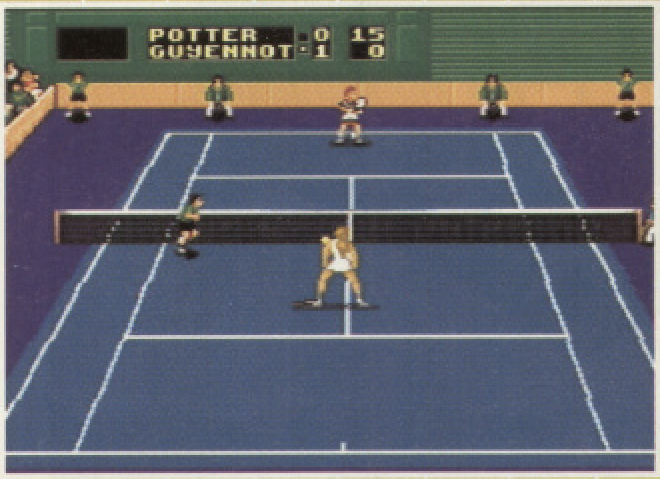
One of the neatest touches in the original was arguing with the umpire over dodgy line-calls, and Codemasters are set to take their binary umpires another step forward with the addition of a selection of camera angles to validate such calls. These complement the already completely revamped graphics, by adding zoom modes which inset a box displaying the questionable bounce, or replaying the last few frames whilst panning around the play area. Sadly, it is still presently impossible to smack the crap out of any ball-boys who get in the way. That would teach them for peeing into the Barley Water instead of refilling it properly.

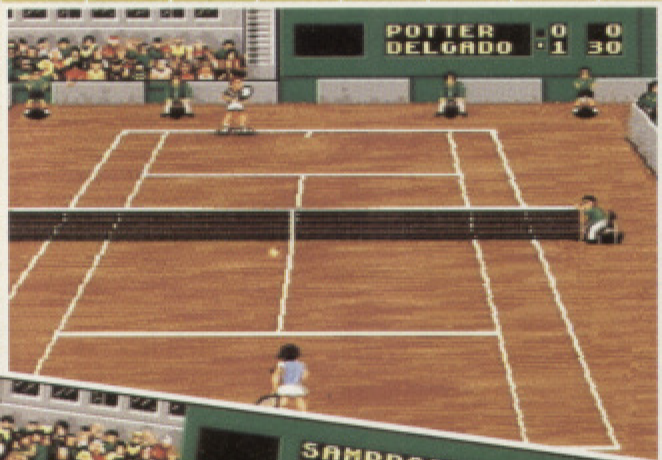


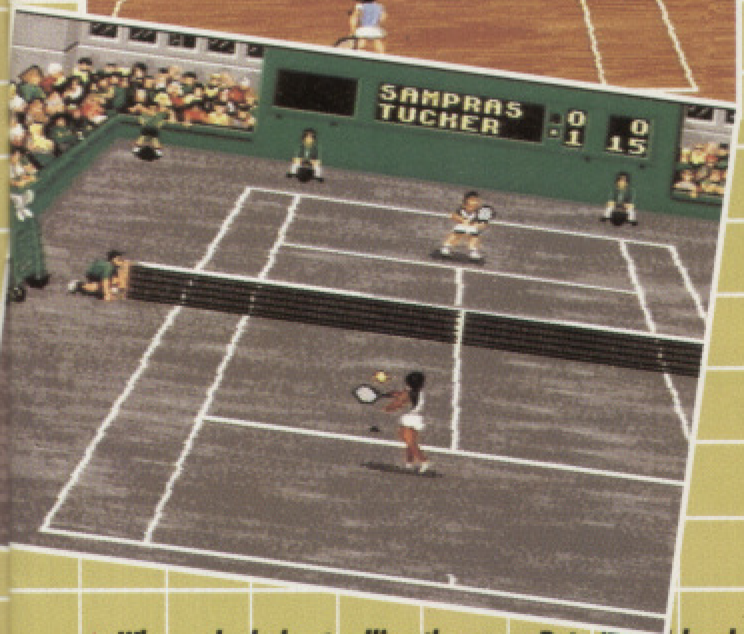




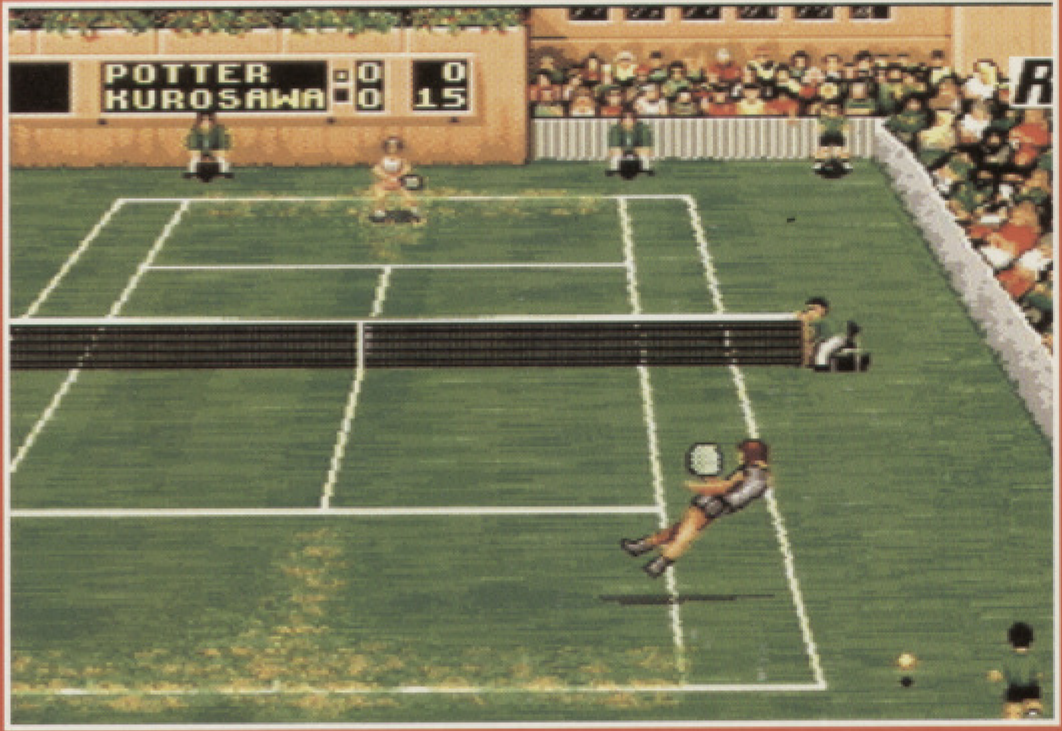
▲ *It really does like combining top playability with even better graphics this time around. Huzzah!*







▲ *When asked about calling the game Pete '96, Richard at Codemasters was not able to give us a satisfactory answer. We guess it's a bit like 'Space 1999'.*



SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

Sampras '96 sees the addition of several new ideas, and the departure of a few of the less popular ones from the original. For extra realism and control, Codemasters' programmers have made some of the more acrobatic moves easier to effect, allowing players to pull off dives and smashes with ease, and step back instinctively to reposition a shot. The ball movement has also been tinkered with to allow shots which clip the net, and react violently to spin. With some 40% of the game still to be coded, several other modes are also being tossed around, including a possible eight-player mode for doubles tournaments, and a league system where every participant plays each other, with points awarded for winning matches and sets. Gone for good, though, are all the old sprites, the crazy mode (no more Dizzy smashing, then), and the world tour.

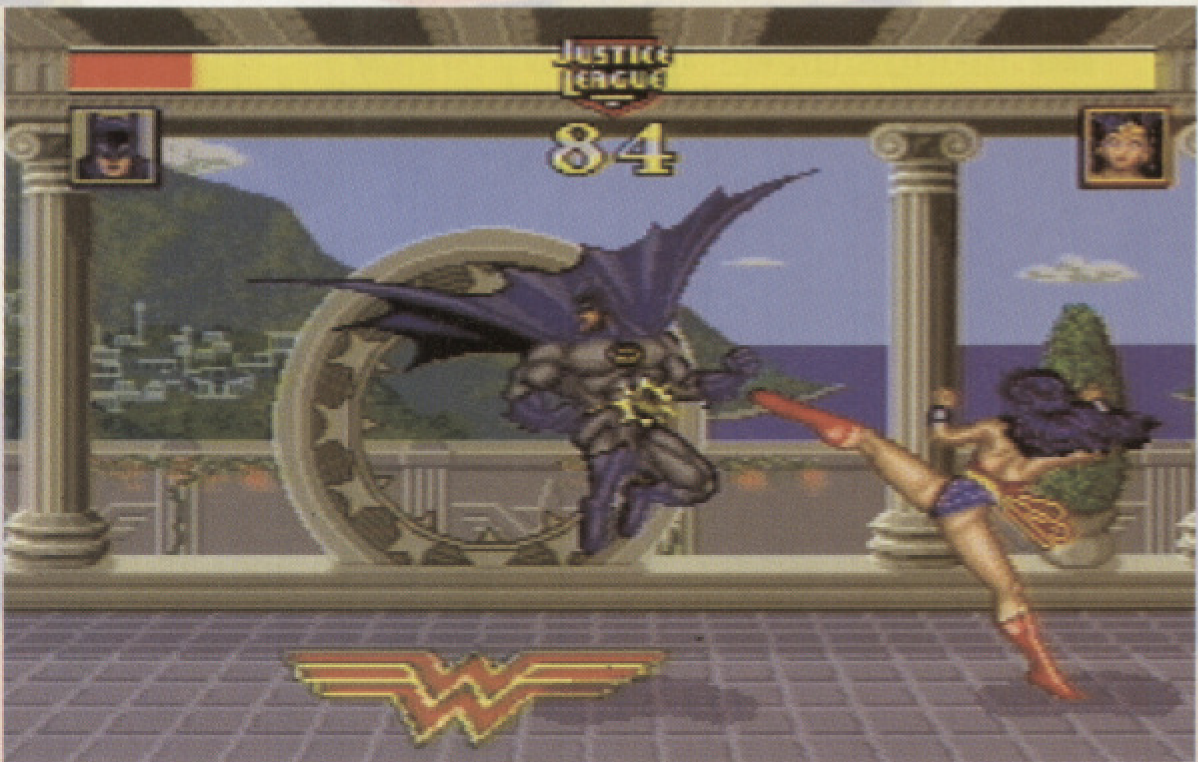
1-2 PLAYER	
16 MEG	
RELEASE	JUNE
BY	ACCLAIM
PRICE	TBA
GAME TYPE	PLATFORM
PERCENT COMPLETE	

JUSTICE LEAGUE TASK FORCE

It's the age-old question, isn't it? If Superman and Batman were to have a scrap, right, who'd have who? I mean, after all Superman has got laser eyes whereas Batman has only got his poxy utility belt and a few Batarangs. And, anyway, The Flash is faster and harder so could probably have them both. Now, courtesy of Acclaim's latest acquisition, Sunsoft, you can indeed decide who is the hardest of all the DC super-heroes, as the likes of Batman, Wonder Woman, Superman, et al get together for a right jolly well royal rumble.

A one or two-player game, Justice League is a traditional-style beat 'em up with the player selecting one of the eight heroes on offer, and using their punches, kicks and special moves to KO their superfoe. Alternatively, the one-player adds the evil Darkseid to the mix, throws in a scenario regarding his plans for world domination using clones of the Justice League, and leaves the player to battle their way to a final confrontation with ol' metal noggin himself.





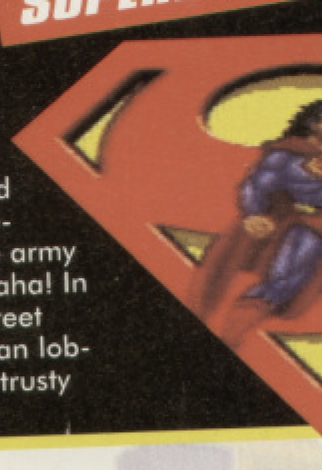


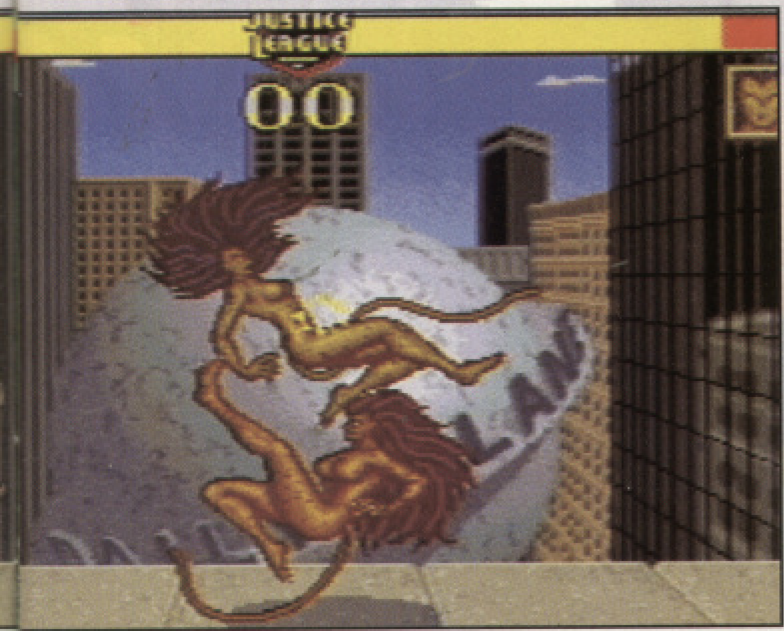


SUPER TROOPERS

Justice League offers the player control over some of DC Comics' greatest heroes and villains. On the side of good there's Superman, The Flash, Wonder Woman, and Batman, whilst the baddies consist of Darkseid and his feline partner in crime. In one-player mode, only the heroes are available, and the plot unfolds in a series of interludes as the player battles against their one-time JL allies — with the ultimate revelation that Darkseid has created a clone army of your Supermates which he plans to use to take over the world, hahahahahahaha! In addition to the customary punches and kicks, each character is armed with Street Fighter-style special moves with Superman using his laser eyes, Wonder Woman lobbing metal bangles all over the place and Batman slicing up baddies with his trusty

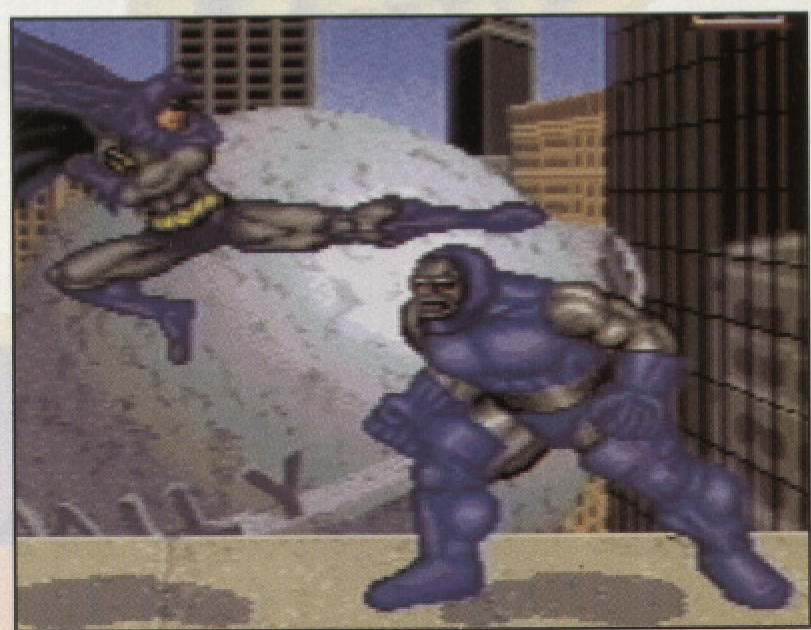
SUPERMAN





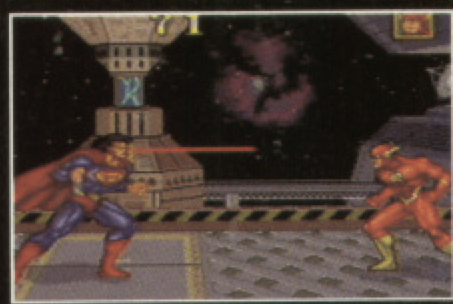






CAPTAIN COMBO

As with Capcom's classic, Street Fighter, Justice League is best played using a six-button pad. The top range of buttons effect the three different punch strengths, and the bottom three are used for kicks, whilst a three-button pad user presses 'Start' to switch between the two. As the Justice League heroes enter battle, high-scoring combos are also on offer with huge bonuses awarded for successfully stringing together a flurry of punches and kicks. But, hey, you knew that already.



▲ *Supey's frankfurter attack.*













1 PLAYER	16 MEG
RELEASE	NOVEMBER
BY	US GOLD
PRICE	TBA
GAME TYPE	PLATFORM

PERCENT COMPLETE

INDIANA JO
GREATEST ADVE

Indiana Jones' brief flirtations with video games have always been rather crappy affairs int he past, but US Gold are hoping to redress the balance with Indy's latest megadrive outing. Converted from JVC's Super NES original, US Gold's latest addition to the Indiana Jones legend draws ideas from each of the three films. Casting the player as the Fedora-wearing hero, Greatest Adventures is a mix of platform and 3D games, which recreates classic moments from the trilogy, such as the ball chase, Temple Of Doom's mine cart ride, and the fracas outside the Obi Wan club. All the heroic aspects of George Lucas' character have been included, too, with programmers Lucasarts arming him with a gun, grenades and his trusty whip. Similarly, Indy's athletic prowess has also been recreated in a sprite which runs, jumps and rolls through danger with minimal effort. Indiana Jones' Greatest Adventure's code is currently 80% complete, and Indy is set to swing onto the Megadrive in time for September.



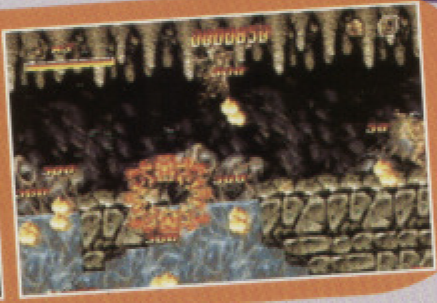














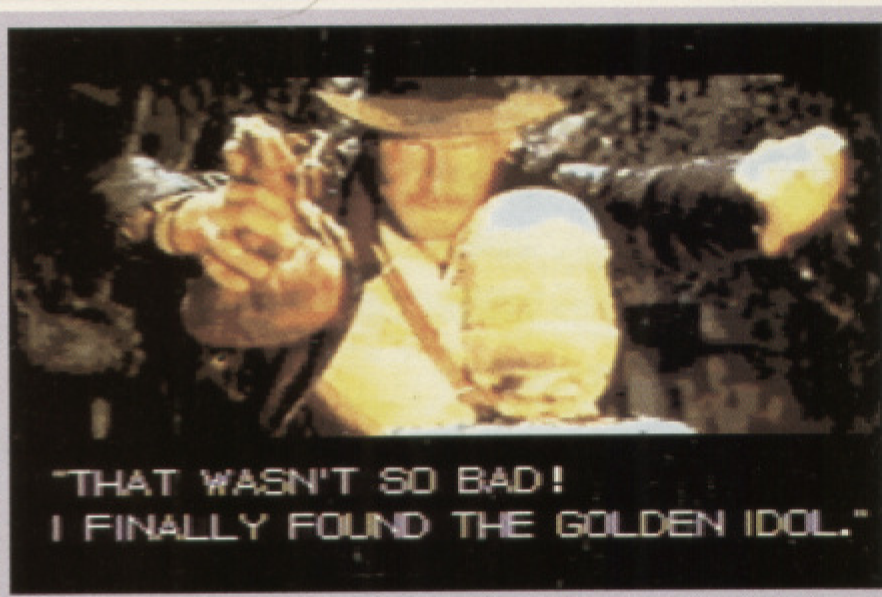
▲ *Whip me, bite me, anyway you like me, long as you love me it's alright.*

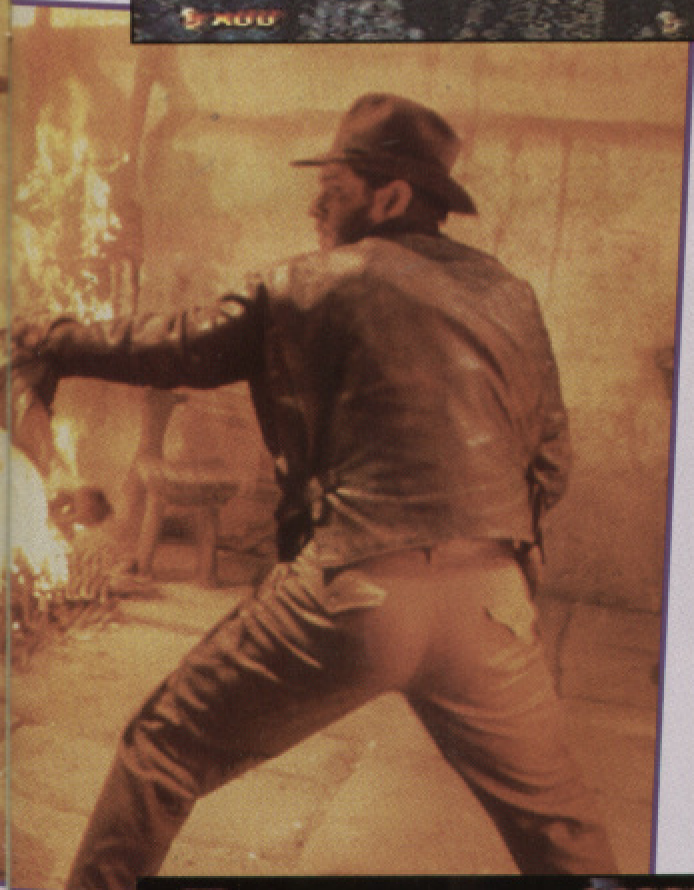
INDY-SCREET

Indy's adventures pit him against the roughest bunch of villains since... well, since the films. Starting with his quest to find the Golden Idol, no sooner has it been retrieved from the natives, spiders, bats and traps guarding it, than he is mugged for it, and flies off to wintry climes, enters a burning building, and is attacked by wolves, hunters, gangsters and even more bats and birds. This pattern is repeated throughout the game, with the hazards moving from falling stalactites and snow balls(!), to lava pits and moving cars! Thankfully, Indy's whip, fists and gun are on hand to fend off such unwanted attention, with the former also useful for swinging across large chasms!

ONES' NTURE







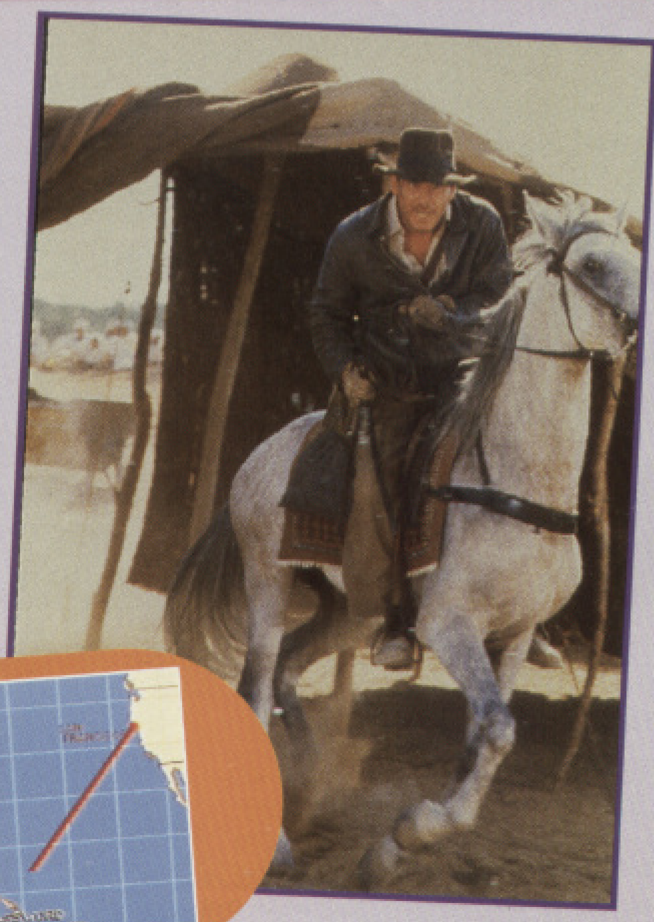




MODE 7? PAH!

Once again, the gap between the Super NES and Megadrive is reduced, as Lucasarts unveil one of the best 3D effects to grace the Sega machine yet. Key levels during Indy's (Greatest) adventures drop the avid explorer into the seat of a biplane or recreate the 'dinghy down the mountain' scene from Temple Of Doom, which the Super NES could handle easily thanks to its custom Mode 7 scaling capabilities. The Megadrive, of course, doesn't possess such chippery, but Lucasarts have worked around this with some very clever programming which ensures the oncoming enemy planes or snow-covered obstacles are updated smoothly and rapidly. In fact, they even make the 3D bits in Time Warner's The Lawnmower Man look positively primitive!









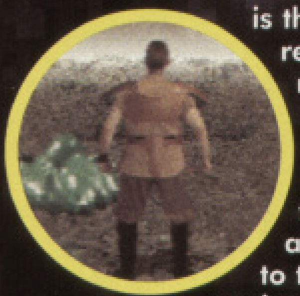


1 PLAYER	RELEASE	APRIL
	BY	SEGA
	PRICE	TBA
	GAME TYPE	RPG

PERCENT COMPLETE



Anyone remember Super Hydlide on the Megadrive? No? Well, it was a clapped-out, wheezing overhead view role-playing game with some of the most bizarre, wizened block graphics ever witnessed on the Megadrive. Not surprisingly, it sank into the depths of Game Hell and was never seen again. However, Sega of Japan have exhumed its putrid remains and now it arises Phoenix-like from the ashes in the form of this stunning-looking Sega Saturn title.



Of course, the big deal about this title is that it's the first RPG to be set in a real-time 3D game area. That's right - no blocky sprites and turn-by-turn combat here - everything happens just like it would in real life (if carnivorous trees and blood-sucking goblins actually existed, that is). Adding to the reality of the game is the environment itself. Trees, hills, buildings, castles and underground caves all combine to create a superb-looking landscape. The only problem with it is that the update of the 3D is remarkably jerky compared to the likes of Deadalus and Daytona USA. But still, it an RPG, not an action game, so that is forgiveable.

What is also quite interesting about Virtual Hydlide is that no two games are ever the same. Every time you start the adventure, a random number generator is used to shape the landscape and alter aspects of the quest you undertake. A useful map function is included so you don't get lost (which is a distinct possibility since the environs are never quite the same).

We've had a quick playtest on Virtual Hydlide but in the words of Carol Vorderman, "We're still not convinced" of the game's quality. Hopefully, once we've experienced the rich tapestry of the Hydlide world with its scope for wonderful adventure and thrilling combat, we'll be able to deservedly sing the game's praises. Wait until next month's exciting issue of MEAN MACHINES for the final verdict.





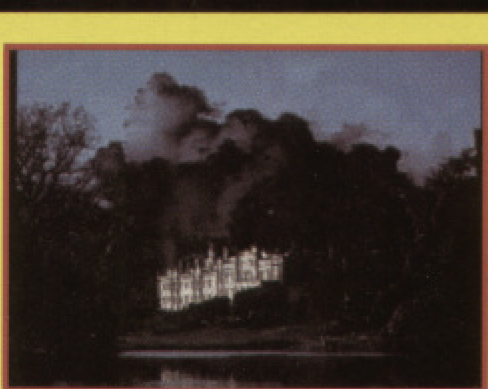
▲ *The Hydlideer takes a trip to beautiful Stoneybridge, home of the Stoneybridge town council and tourist board. Ah, right ye are, Mergreet.*





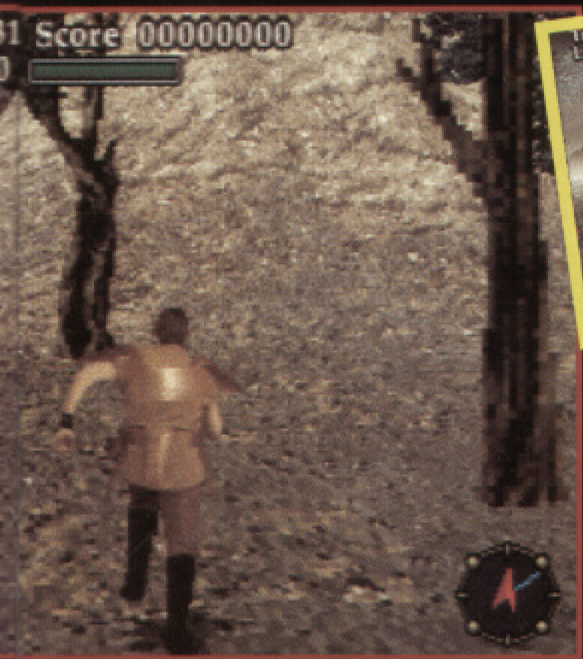
LISTEN, PRINCESS

Virtual Hydlide has been unable to resist one of those big sprawling rendered intros, but there's more point to one here with the strong adventure plot. Basically, you're out to save the Princess, who has been abducted from her magical castle.



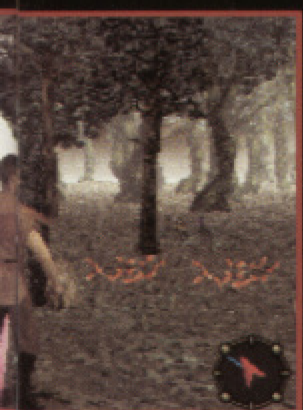












▲ ***Our remarkable powers of game divination suggest that Hydlide, coming from T&E Soft, was probably created from the same 3-S engine as Pebble Beach Golf. Just think of it a one big Links.***







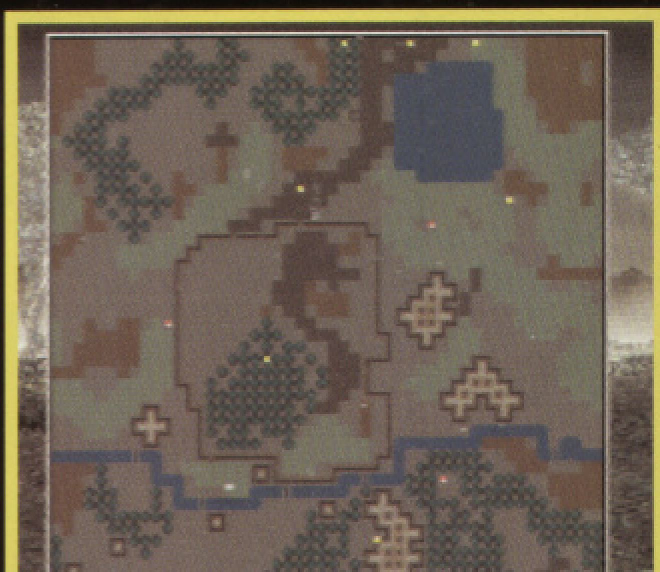


MAC THE KNIFE

Battles play a large part in the game, with you running into wandering monsters on a regular basis. These, in good Dungeons and Dragons tradition, start with slimepools and the like (very embarassing to fall victim to) and evolve into kobolds, trolls etc. The accompanying sounds for these encounters is very impressive, with noises from your foes and cries and grunts from the player.







▲ ***This is the map, very 32-bit don't you think? It changes every time you play, so they say.***

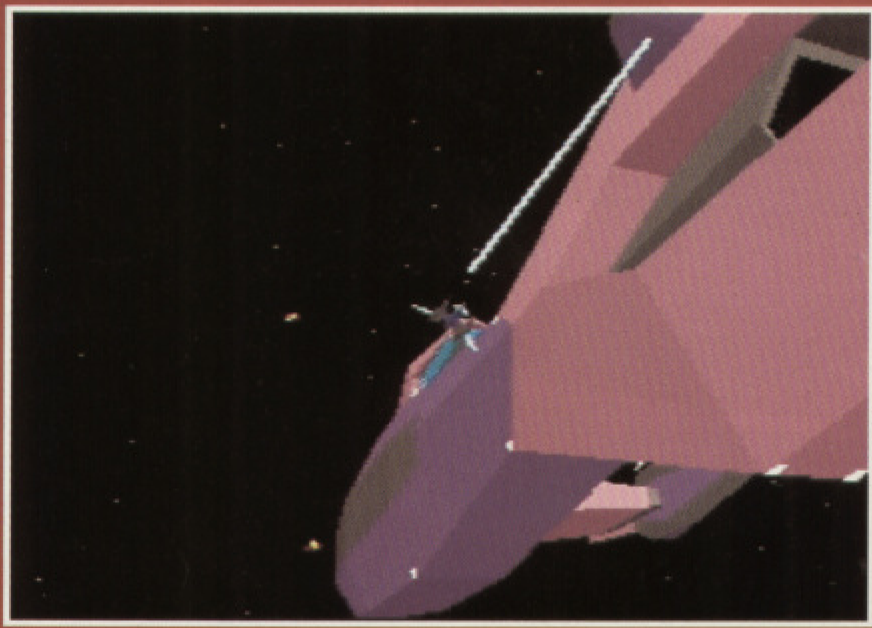
STELLAR ASSAULT

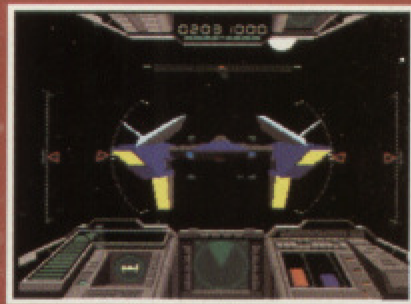
It's almost shiny helmet time on the 32X, as Sega put the final touches to Stellar Assault, definitely the most appealing 32X title they have lined up for the summer season. One of the final decisions on the game is the title, with Sega Europe wrestling between the US' Shadow Squadron monikor and the original Starry pseudonym. The game has been a classic case of how uninspiring projects have a habit of developing into must-haves. Originally looking like a poor man's Virtua Star Wars, Stellar is exciting for the freedom it offers players to partake in huge space battles, and the amount going on in the game.

Each episodic level pits your tiny fighter against a collection of unfeasibly large motherships, and their escorting fighters. From our original work-in-progress the graphics have become considerably more complex and convincing, with no loss of speed. The gameplay has undergone huge changes, with each of the two player ships being granted spectacular new weapons — a series of homing missiles for Feather 1, and a massive energy bomb for the dual player Feather 2. Next issue we are assured of a review for this remarkable blaster.

CAUGHT ON CAMERA

In the absence of Virtua-style viewpoints, Stellar Assault retains its experimental trace mode. This captures the action of each game as it takes place, allowing you to replay it from a series of out-of-ship viewpoints. It's unique to Stellar and works extremely well. The launch sequences for each ship have been redone, and the smaller fighter now docks with a refuelling ship between levels.

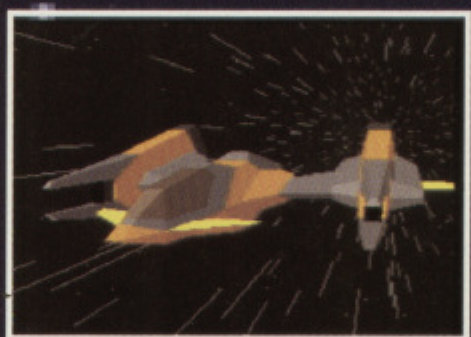


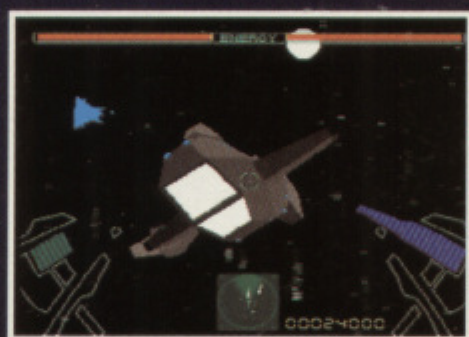




▲ I used to share a house with three people, and one of the girls was really odd. I couldn't sleep one night and went down to make some tea, only to find her eating three jars of jam at once with a large wooden spoon.







◄ Hey, kids, come and say hello to Chesney, the grinning space shark. Hi, Chesney!

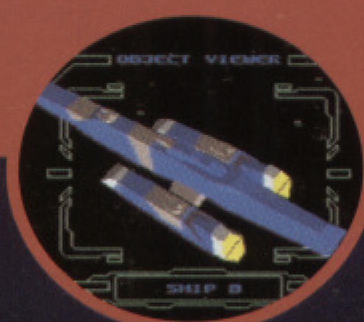
1-2 PLAYER	RELEASE	JUNE
	BY	SEGA
24 MEG	PRICE	TBA
	GAME TYPE	PLATFORM

PERCENT COMPLETE

VIEWMASTER

The object viewer lets you see some of the intricate designs for the enemy craft, and manipulate them in 3D. It's just one of a comprehensive array of options, including changing all the existing colour palletes for polygons, and implementing team play.







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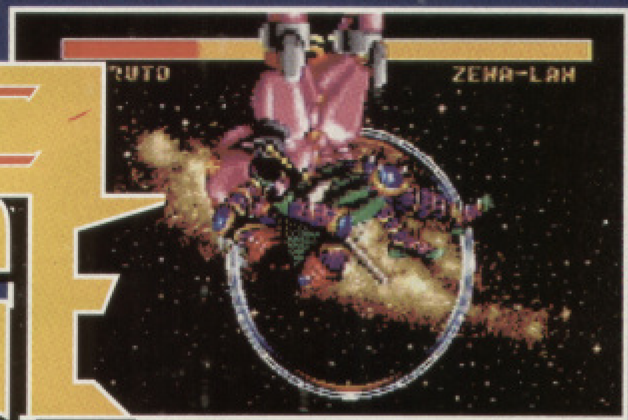
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PAULS TIPS



Things are starting to hot up in tips central this month — and I'm not just talking about the midday sun raising the office temperature! Yes sirree, we've nabbed loads of next generation goodies for your appreciation, plus some stonking cheats for plenty 'o 16bit marvels. And what's more, the team have been busying away to come up with the goods on the Player's Guides side. This month take a sly look at Gus' six page stormer on the excellent RPG, Soleil. Plus expert tips on playing Bullfrog's tremendous sim, Theme Park, and due to public demand, the complete round-up of every Mega-Move in WWF Raw. This month we've also seen tipping beyond the call of duty from one Andrew Ogier from Guernsey. For his troubles he will receive a copy of Konami's excellent Snatcher for the Mega-CD! Let that be a lesson to the rest of you scamps sending in your tips from years ago! So get sending in those tips and cheats and you too could win, win, win! The address is: DAYTONA UK, MEAN MACHINES SEGA, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU

COSMIC CARNAGE



FATAL MOVES

Oh dear poor old Cosmic Carnage, hardly what you'd call a top beat 'em up. But still who's quibbling when you can have blood and guts galore at the push of a button! Even though there's nothing in the manual about these gore-tastic exploits, Gerard Foster — the young whippersnapper — has discovered the way to pull off the fatal moves. When the other character's energy bar reaches absolute bare minimum, activate a special move, sit back, and watch the blood flow!



DAYTONA USA

MIRROR MODE, TIME ATTACK, AND VIRTUA RACING DELUXE AND VIRTUA FIGHTER SOUND TESTS

You've read the review. You may have bought the CD on import. But now's your chance to checkout the Mirror Mode on all tracks, drive against the clock without any other cars on the track, and delight your ears with the musical treats of Virtua Racing Deluxe and Virtua Fighter! Gentlemen start your tipping!

MIRROR MODE

It's all so easy when you know how! To access the Mirror tracks simply choose the Saturn mode,go to the track select screen and press the START button. All three tracks will reverse in true Mirror Mode style and are totally playable. Smart stuff!

DRIVE ALONE AGAINST THE CLOCK

In a similar fashion to the Mirror Mode select, for the Time Attack option go to the Car Select screen and hold the START button. A Time Attack logo appears and if you press the C button, the race begins with no other cars save your good self.

SOUND TEST

Wanna try out the music for both Virtua Racing Deluxe and Virtua Fighter? Well by qualifying for any track and entering your initials as either V.R or V.F, you can sample their lovely theme tunes. Also, there are other Sega coin-op tunes in there, too. Try A.B, O.R, and G.F.

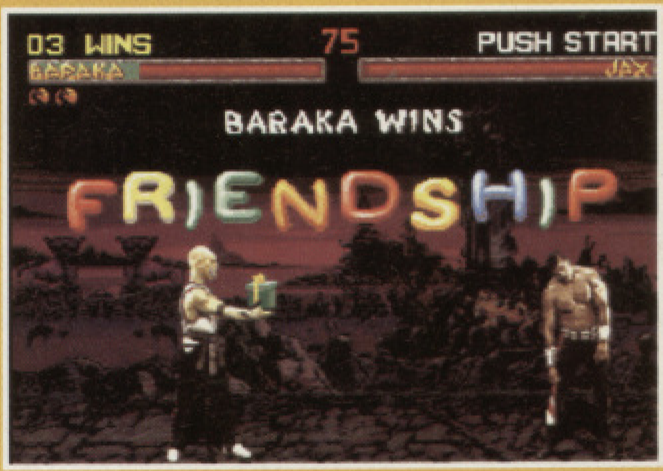
MAKE JEFFRY TURN?!

Take a spin around the Expert track and you'll notice the rather prominent statue of Jeffry MacWild of Virtua Fighter fame. In a bizarre Japanese twist of reality the statue turns around if you stop in front of it and hit the X button. Weirdsville!

MORTAL KOMBAT II

TEST MODE

Just as a fancy combination of joypad wiggling unveiled codes galore for MKII on the Megadrive, the same applies for the 32bit version. Highlight 'Done' as before, and move the pad left, down, right, right, down, left. Then move it left three times, followed by right three times. Ta-da! A spanking test mode.





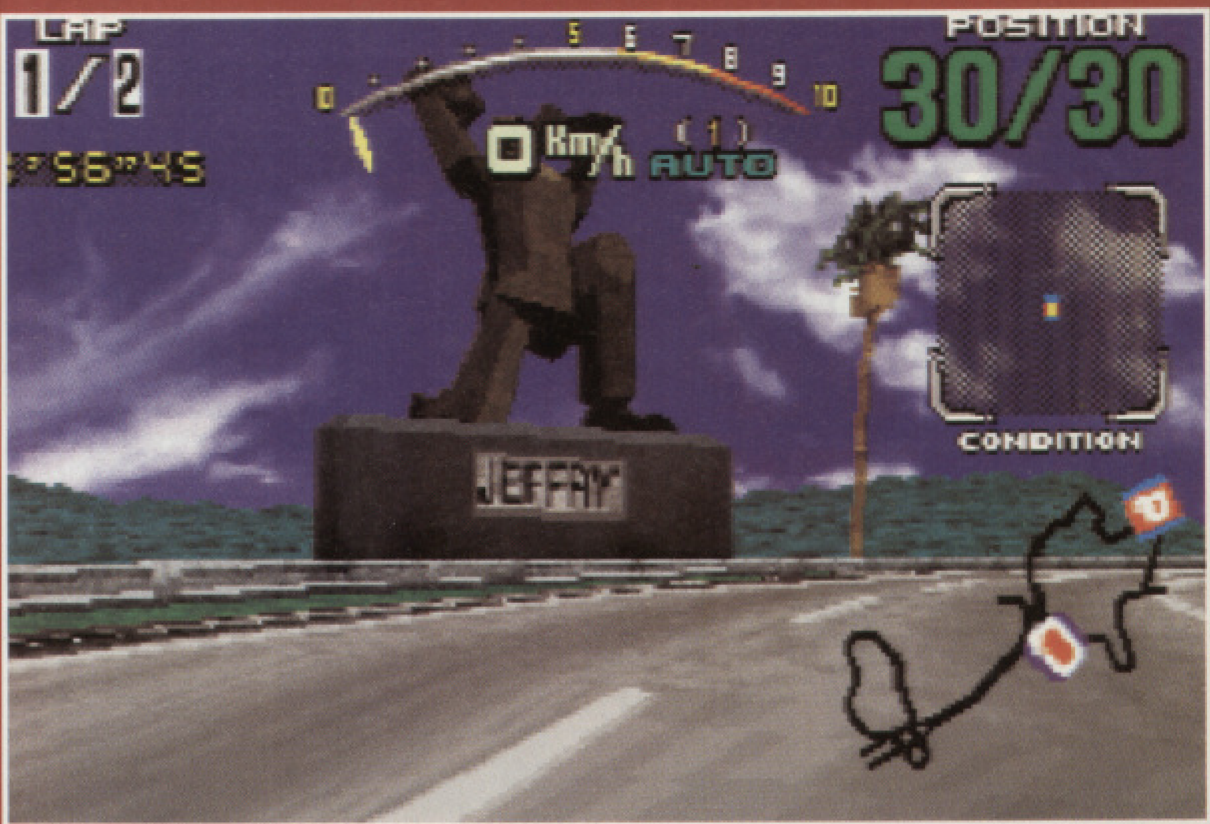
FIFA '95

STUPID TEAM

And we thought we'd seen the last of the FIFA cheats. You've had the curve ball, the invisible walls, and the super offence tactics. But according to Ian Phillips from Colerne in Wilts if you go to the Options screen and input A, B, C, A, B, and C, and then start the game, pause and press A, you can access the Stupid Team! Be prepared for the dumbest bunch of halfwits to ever grace a football field.

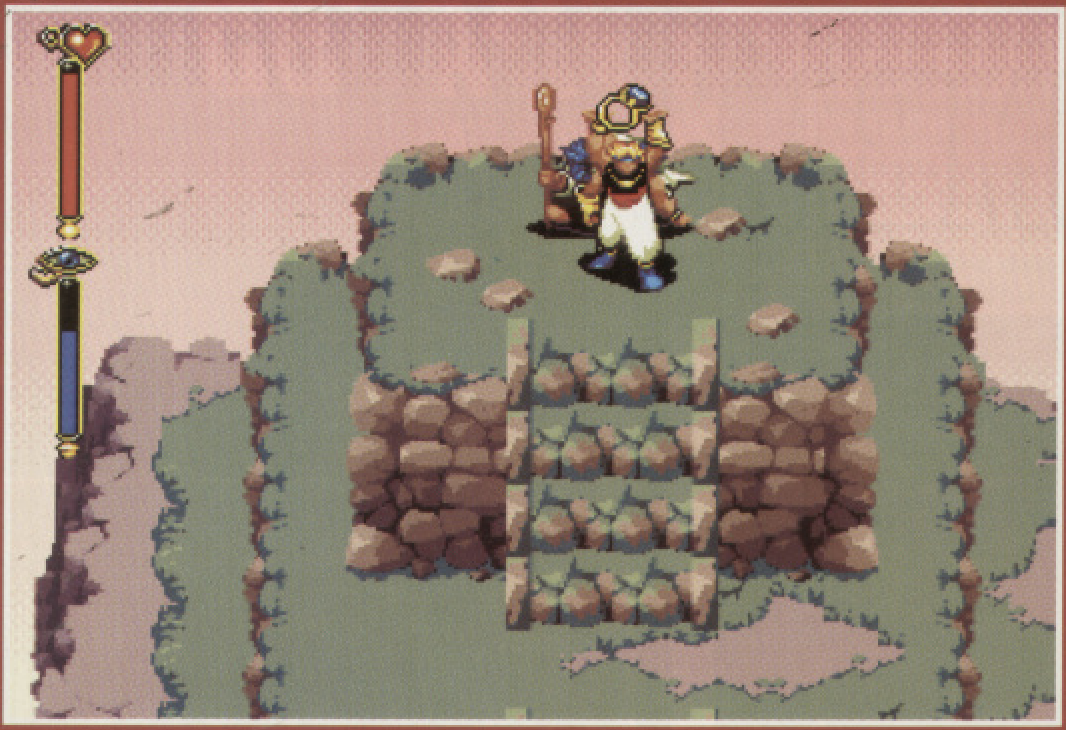












STORY OF THOR

ENTER THE RACE AND FIND THE ELIXIR

A thoroughly top RPG, Thor is rumoured to contain stacks of hidden objects and potions. So to get the ball rolling on the Thor front, here is the first of hopefully, many letters. Waymond Fung from Birmingham points out the direction to the racing track. To access it, firstly smash down the brick wall on your way to the castle where you board the ship. To start the race summon the Efreet and make them go into the circuit by pressing the A button twice.

To find the special potion, Elixir, which resurrects Ali after he has kicked the bucket, can be found in the shrine. Look for the two streams, and follow the streams under the platform. Beneath one of the platforms is a sword with 50 uses, and under the other is the marvellous Elixir. Hurrah!



PROBOTECTOR

70 LIVES AND LEVEL SELECT

One of the toughest games to grace the Megadrive in recent months, Probotector is stumping gamesplayers the country across. Not Andrew Ogier though, as he has discovered two absolutely superb cheats.

70 LIVES

If you've any aspirations of completing the game, 70 lives will be an essential requirement. To get them enter at the Title screen C, B, A, RIGHT, LEFT, C, B, A, RIGHT, LEFT, C, B, A, RIGHT, and LEFT on Pad 2.

LEVEL SELECT

However if you can't stand the heat of playing the game through to the end, a Level select is just the thing you need. Once more on the Title screen enter A, B, C, RIGHT, LEFT, A, B, C, RIGHT, LEFT, A, B, C, RIGHT, and LEFT, and hey presto, one level select!

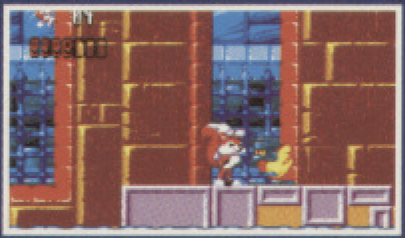


MR. NUTZ 2

CODES UP TO LEVEL FOUR

Ah, he's so cute! That is until you get stuck on one of his devilish little levels. To help out here's a couple of small tippets in the form of level codes to keep you going.

LEVEL ONE — IMNAAR44, LEVEL TWO — RIRAAGQ
LEVEL THREE — ZQVIAHE, LEVEL FOUR — YQVIAHC



SECOND SAMURAI

LEVEL CODES

Sword slashing tomfoolery from Patrick Bayliss of Dumbartonshire and his level codes for Second Samurai.

LEVEL 2 — KWCETGK
LEVEL 3 — DFFDNMIC
LEVEL 4 — 2SFABLAC
LEVEL 5 — GACKM4WB
LEVEL 6 — HFXDRTJK
LEVEL 7 — FA2FABLA
LEVEL 8 — 5LYDRTJK
LEVEL 9 — WFTNQ63J
LEVEL 10 — OM6YP5X4
LEVEL 11 —HS5HOU6D
LEVEL 12 — P1EKM4WB
LEVEL 13 — KLRA3F1H
LEVEL 14 — LLD6A3F1
LEVEL 15 — MRWVZYRZ

ROAD RASH 3 TOUR DE FORCE

SPECIAL CHEAT MODE

It seems we have a new top tipster on the block. Andrew Ogier from Guernsey has really out done himself this month with a collection of superb tips and cheats. First from his directory of tipness is a special cheat mode for the all-new racer from the Road Rash series. To select the mode, press A, B, RIGHT, A, C, A, DOWN, A, B, RIGHT, and A on the Title screen.

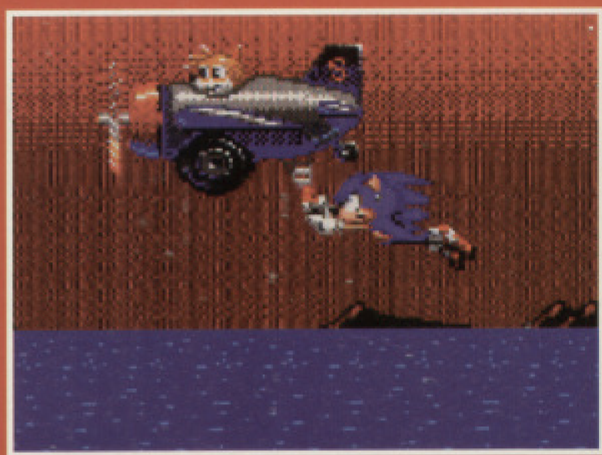


SONIC SPINBALL

LEVEL SELECT

Looks like we opened a right can of worms the other month with the Sonic cheats special. Since then I've been inundated by letters from saddos sending in ten pages worth of useless sound tests and the like. Not in the same sad category is young Nygel Nevins from Manchester who came up with this veyr nifty Level Select for Sonic's pinball spectacular. To make it work, go to the Options screen and input A, DOWN, B, DOWN, C, DOWN, A, B, UP, A, C, UP, B, C, and UP. If you've done it correctly a small noise should sound, and now the levels are selectable by leaving the Options and pressing:

A+START — LEVEL 2
B+START — LEVEL 3
C+START — LEVEL 4



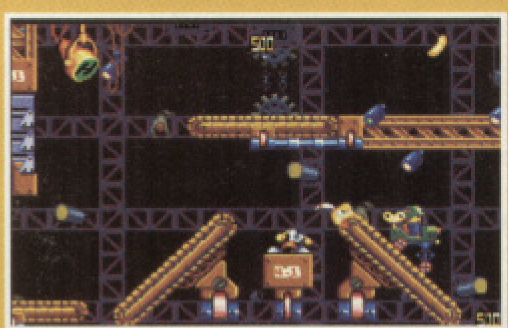
DYNAMITE HEADDY

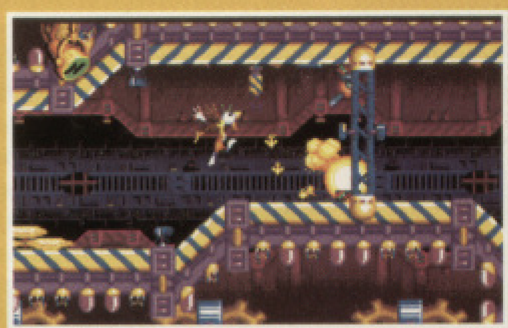
UPDATE

In a game as big as Headdy, it's hardly surprising a some things get missed out of a player's guide. So to set the record straight, Andrew Cale is here to point out a couple of small omissions.

To find the extra life on the Toyz in the Hood level, make your way to the top of the screen. When you find the second large red sphere, butt it onto the platform below. From here you can reach the platform above to the left where a nasty is waiting and a superb extra life.

Andrew also wants to point out the way to collect continues is to grab as many T scrolls as poss after defeating a Keymaster. Thanks for that, but I think you'll find the same top tip in the handbook, mate!





RED ZONE

PLAY MISSION EIGHT WITH INVINCIBILITY

Once more Red Zone makes an appearance in these hallowed pages, and once more Andrew Ogier from Guernsey comes forth with a code to play tough mission eight with invincibility. On the code screen enter A, B, B, C, A, A, C, A, C, B, and C.

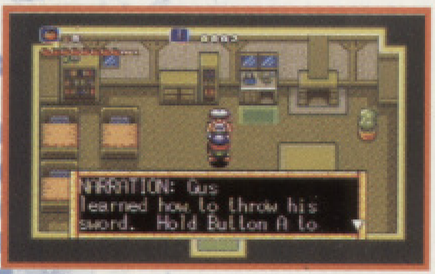


Soleil SOLUTION

From the frequent telephone calls. we gather a lot of you have bought Soleil, and some of you want help. I suppose that's just the slovenly attitude of gamesplayers today, many of whom sound old enough to know better. In a bid to coax you to better gamesplay, let's start our guide to this big RPG. But only read what you need.

CHAPTER ONE





1. Speak to everyone at your party to set off the fireworks. Head north to the castle to get approval from the King to enter the Rafflesia training school. The rest of the townsfolk have advice, but nothing essential to offer. At the Training school, go straight into the easy course, looking for the 20 coins required for the sword trainer. You'll find some lurking in the undergrowth. After getting the medal, receive your lesson in swordsmanship.

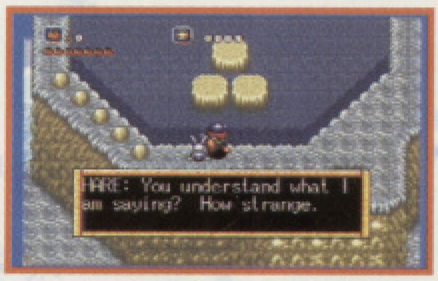
2. Go to Dahlia valley and ascend midway. You should find a narrow cleft blocked by two rocks, with a boarded up hole in the cliff. Use your powered











sword to break open the hole. You'll be swept by a torrent down to a house. Inside is a wolf, the first boss. After defeating him, heed the old woman and return to Soleil. Leave by the side exit, into the playground area. Find the tent with the white flower outside. The Fortune Teller inside grants you the power to speak to animals. Return to your own house in Soleil Town and speak to the dog. He will join you. Now go back to Dahlia valley and ascend to the very top, where your new pal will persuade the rabbit to teach you how to jump.

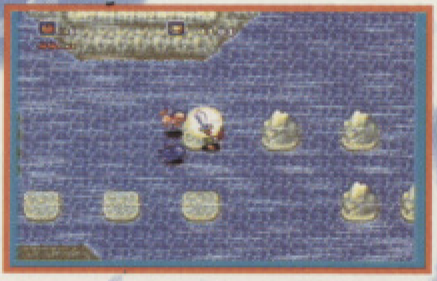
3. Go to the second (left) course of the Rafflesia training ground. There are no great problems here apart from some hidden bonuses and a couple of traps. One coin stash is triggered by the red switch protected by two swinging flamethrowers. The other is a coin bag found across a bridge in the area just after the floating logs. The blue blocks are also a minor puzzle. Push them into the gaps in lines of other blue blocks to complete the circuit, then strike the red trigger block.



4. Travel up past Dahlia to Anemone beach. Take the first set of steps on the right hand side, and travel down to find a cash bag and health bonus. Go back up, watching out for the area of collapsing soil that leaves a set of platforms behind. At the point where you find Sonic you need to go back onto the beach and up the second set of steps. Break a hole in the fence by powering the sword and hitting the red tile. Continue up to reach the town.



5. In the town go to the leftmost hut and jump on the doormat three times. Inside is an elephant who will instruct you on lifting. After he tells you to lift the crate you need to go back and ask again to be successful. Visit the bottom hut to hire the cat for 50 malins. Stop the running animals for information. Leave by the exit to the north.





6. Speak to the plant and lift the rock to gain entry. This area consists of a series of 'gates' and 'keys'. The gates are the blue blocks, and the keys are the red pads to jump on. Go full right first and press the red pad there. Double back and go up, taking out all the pads in that area. The sea creatures are a major hazard, so take out each one in turn with an aimed flying sword. Return to the level start point and the cliff on the

right side. To cross water wait for the wind to blow in the right direction and jump — you will get extra distance. On the other side of the promontary there is a series of small stepping stones. Use the sword to flatten the next one ahead and jump on to find a cash bag. The wind cannot blow you off an island. Further up is a wooden bridge leading to another island with a crate and glowing apple. Ignore this area at present. Carry on up the mainland, cross the stepping stones and collect the crate. Drop it into the water at the gap in the wall and jump to some off screen platforms. Time a jump across the smiling face to reach the octopus lair.

7. The Octopus uses the penguin to fire icebolts. These are easily avoidable, and you're more likely to take damage from the spikes at the back of the screen. Stay to the fore and fire diagonally-aimed flying swords. The Octopus mutates into a better adversary after a few shots. Once defeated, Penguy joins you. Return through and Anemone beach and head for Burn Daisy.





8. Ignore the first two ropes of Hot Daisy. Recross the wooden bridge several times and a rope reveals itself, leading to a flashing apple. To the right are two suspended runways. On the lower one is a cash bag. take that then run along the top



one. Your way is blocked by a lake of fire that freezes with your ice sword. Run to the left pushing the blocks into the path of the lava barriers. At the far right is a cash bag. Take that then go up the rope to the top level. A couple of switches, flame throwers and a collapsing bridge stands between you and the exit.







9. Burn Daisy is an underground maze. Go up, right and down the first set of stairs. Go down and turn the fire falls into steps. Go through the trapdoor and across the bridge in the new chamber to find a cash bag. Retrace your steps to the green blocks in the previous chamber. Now go right and under the bridge. Push the perimeter of green blocks to go through a second trapdoor. Jump across a series of suspended platforms and up through an area blocked by two rows of green platforms. Much of the floor from now on disintegrates to the lava below, so be careful where you choose to stop. Step through another trapdoor and walk right. Cross the bridge and descend two sets of stairs. Follow the path passed a set of roving flames, carry on passed the large cave entrance (note it down for future reference) then cross a large field of suspended platforms (get the cash bag), arriving at the Riddler's lair.



10. The Shuffler has an ingenious attack method. He splits into lots of clones, only one of which is vulnerable. These shuffle four times in a sequence. Strike the wrong one at the end of the sequence and you lose energy. The best way is to train your eye on the flashing figure and ignore the other clones. Once defeated, Ciel the squirrel is released. Replace the penguin with him and leave by the bottom right exit.







11. The road to Iris takes you through thick forest. There's a cash bag on a raised strip near the entrance and a glowing apple on an island in the lava lake at the bottom of the screen. As you move right you come to an area blocked by trees. Bounce your sword to the top of the screen to break the



blocks and release a lava river. A small tip — cut the grass beneath trees with fruit to find a good supply of apples. When you enter the town, you will be unable to communicate with the humans. Visit the hole at the top of the town and con-



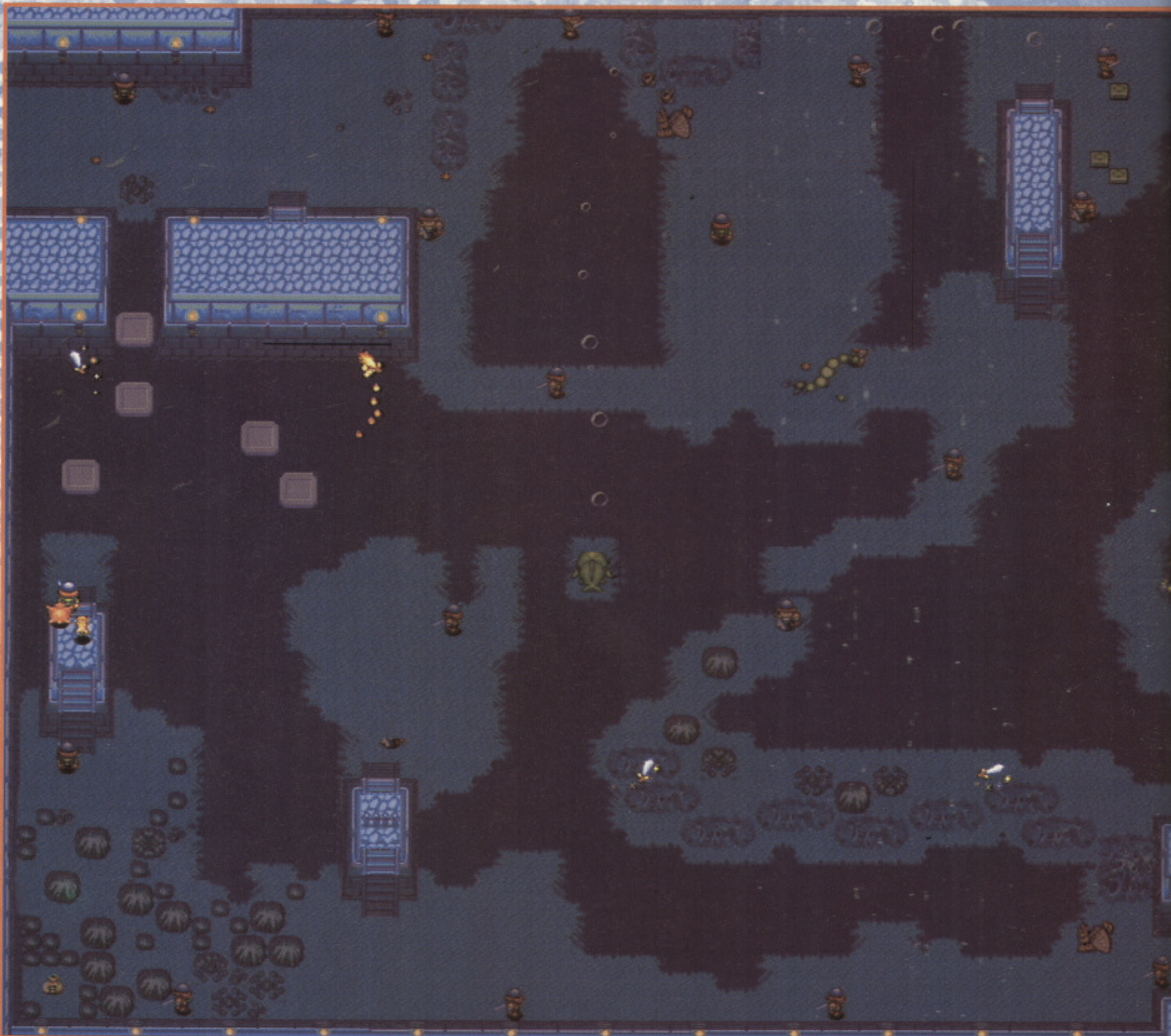




verse with the plant. Go east and remove another set of trees by the same method. Walk down the left bank of the lava river to get a cash bag, then leave by the top exit. In this area you'll find the beavers, a creature shop and the race track. In the top cave you push the blocks into the floor gaps and are rewarded with a glowing apple reward. Practice makes perfect on the race track, with access to Charlie Cheetah for a win. You may return here to record times in future. Go south and east.



12. Jump over the wall and become blob boy. Travel south and west to the tree where blob mates are playing. When the hero approaches follow them into the lair and talk to blob mother. She directs you to Klin, the little green magician who



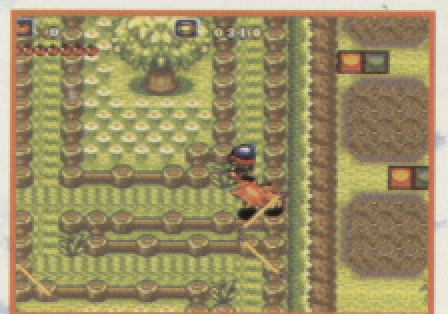






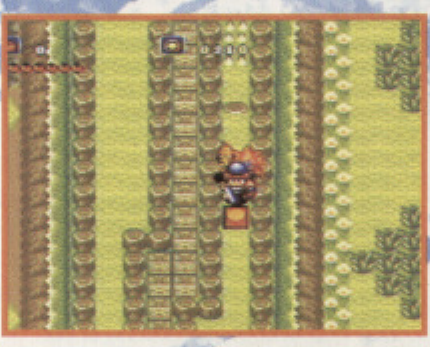


lives in the cake-shaped house. Go to him and return with his answer to blob mum. She then directs you to the witch, whose house is entered by jumping ten times on the centre of the star design made of dots (bottom right of the playfield). A spark is released that allows access to her house. Inside she directs you to a challenge. The solution is easy. Take the caterpillar across, then the flower. Return with the caterpillar and take the chicken across. Go back and return with the caterpillar. The witch will now reward you with your human form. The caterpillar will also join the party. Jump on the red blocks to leave by the bottom exit.



13. Now with Charlie Cheetah you can complete the final stage of the Training school. The secret of making massive jumps is to launch yourself just before the edge. Make your way along the perimeter then run at the rubber band. The next part is linear, with a joyride round a one-way course. When you come to three vertical paths

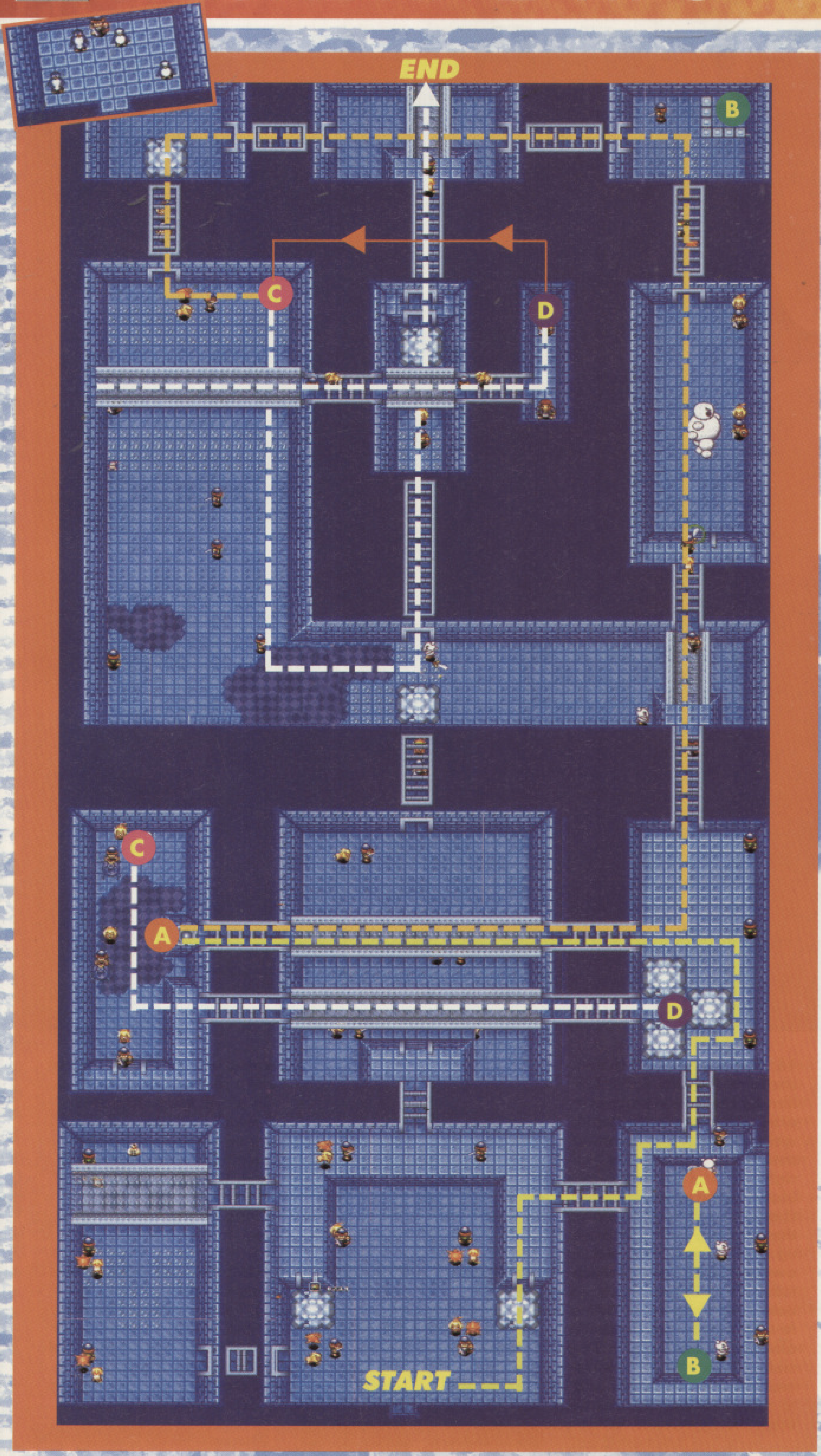






18. Before you enter the castle on Freesia. Enlist the lion by bouncing a sword around the corner to the red switch. In the castle mount the stairs on the right. Each of the large ice blocks has a weak spot, shown as a little nail. Go to the room on the right, then up and along the second overhead gantry. You reach a warp and are taken to a room with an ice-block at the bottom of the screen. Aim a bouncing sword to take out the ice block. Warp back, walk along the gantry and then up as far as possible. Walk left beneath the gantry. In the next room, use Penguy and hit the wall nail to reveal his families handout. Get info from them then go down. When you come to water, use the dinosaur and swim across the far left side. Go along the gantry and through the warp. Use the fire sword to free the hero (he still cannot understand you). Go left, knocking out all the ice blocks from the gantry. In the larger chamber, strike the little pink worm to start a chain reaction. Return through the warp. Strike the ice-blocks to pass them, and return along the other gantry again. Return passed the penguin lair and this time the ice blocking your way has gone. Stand by the side of the pool and fire the sword to destroy the ice on the other side. Use the dinosaur to cross the top edge of the pool. Go up all the way to face Georama.



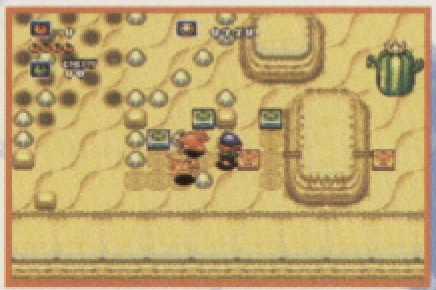


take the right-hand one. After that is a pulsating field. Before entering, gzo around the left hand side to a small patch of grass teeming with coins



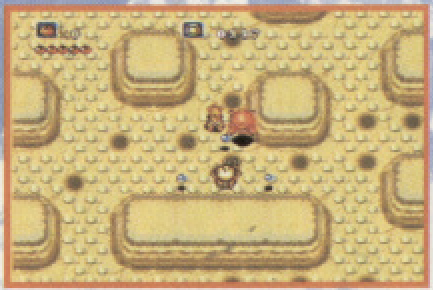


14. Enter Camellia desert. Go south-west, round a rocky outcrop then up to the rock barrier surrounding a red switch. Hit it with the flying sword to open up an area of sand pits. There's a cash bag in the left corner. There's also one to the south, nestling near a wall and a cactus. Go to the top right of the level to find another red switch, with an exit to the desert's second stage nearby.





15. At the start of this stage, move the green block away from the 'fuse' and replace it with the other red block. Detonate and enter an area of intense sand pits. Negotiate a way to the top of the area, where a right leading passage of close sand pits marks the route. There's another red switch between the two lengths of pits that opens up the route



further along. You then come to an area of open spikes. Use flying swords to flatten safe areas out of the sand bumps. There's a glowing apple to the north of this area. This area leads back to the hole-ridden start of the stage. Go onto the grid of pits again, this time hitting the red fuse on the right hand side. Next up is a field of spikes crossed by pixel-perfect jumping from hole to hole. There are two hole routes. The left one takes you to a bag of cash. Retrieve it and return to the right route, taking you to stage three.









16. At the start of this stage is a field of green blocks. You must clear a path to move the red fuse block down to the rock barrier (see diagram). After clearing it, go down and right to the corner where your progress is blocked by stones. Fire your flying sword to strike the red fuse further on. Travel round to the other side of the rock to the cleared area. Now you are close to a settlement with a creature shop. Buy a bat and speak to the dinosaur. Leave by the southern exit and head for Babel.







17. Take the elevator in the tower and start to climb the rope. It suddenly turns into Roxie, an evil guardian. Roxie has a number of attacks; when his arms swing, move to the side to avoid his whiplash. When Roxie glows, move to a position just left of bottom centre and power your sword. He is only vulnerable when his heart is exposed, immediately after his energy blast. After defeating Roxie. Return to Camellia desert and speak to the dinosaur. Turn to leave and he decides on impulse to follow you. Go south and cross to Freesia.

18. Play area mapped on left hand page.

19. Georama is simple to defeat. He alternates between hot and cold forms. Use the opposite sword power to injure him (penguin for hot; lion for cold). After he is vanquished, you warp to a chamber of frozen trees. The tree touching the left wall can be destroyed by the fire sword, revealing a passage to an underwater maze.

20. The underwater maze mapped in detail on the previous spread. Select the cheetah here for that extra speed underwater. Pushing the blocks is useful in stopping the effects of the currents. When clearing areas of coral, return to stock up on air frequently, tackling the job patiently. When you face Leviathan, he creates an illusion of your mother and directs attacks at it. Deflect

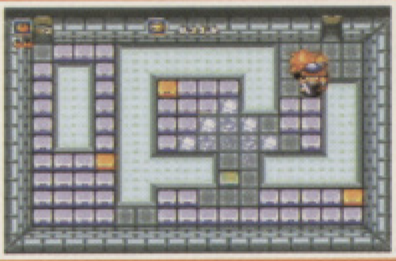


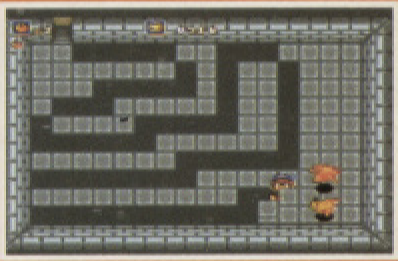


these with your sword. Leviathan will surrender after he has sustained enough of his own attacks and join you. Leave the palace by jumping across the gap near the entrance to Leviathan's chamber and exit to the right.

RETURN TO BABEL

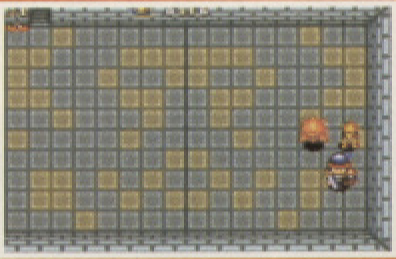
21. Return to Babel, to find the lift out of order. The caterpillar departs. Instead you face a challenge of individual puzzle chambers as you ascend. Selection from top left, clockwise: 1. angled sword to bust blocks. 2. Falling tiles. 3. Conveyor belts - use accelerated jumps. 4. rubber bands - one combination takes you across the chasm. 5. Find the one missing square of the symmetrical pattern. 6. Spiked tiles regrow behind the player.

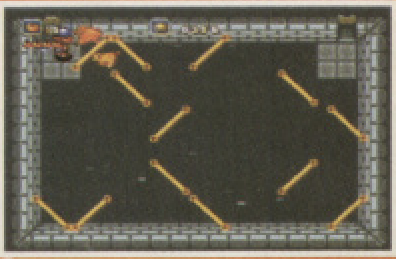








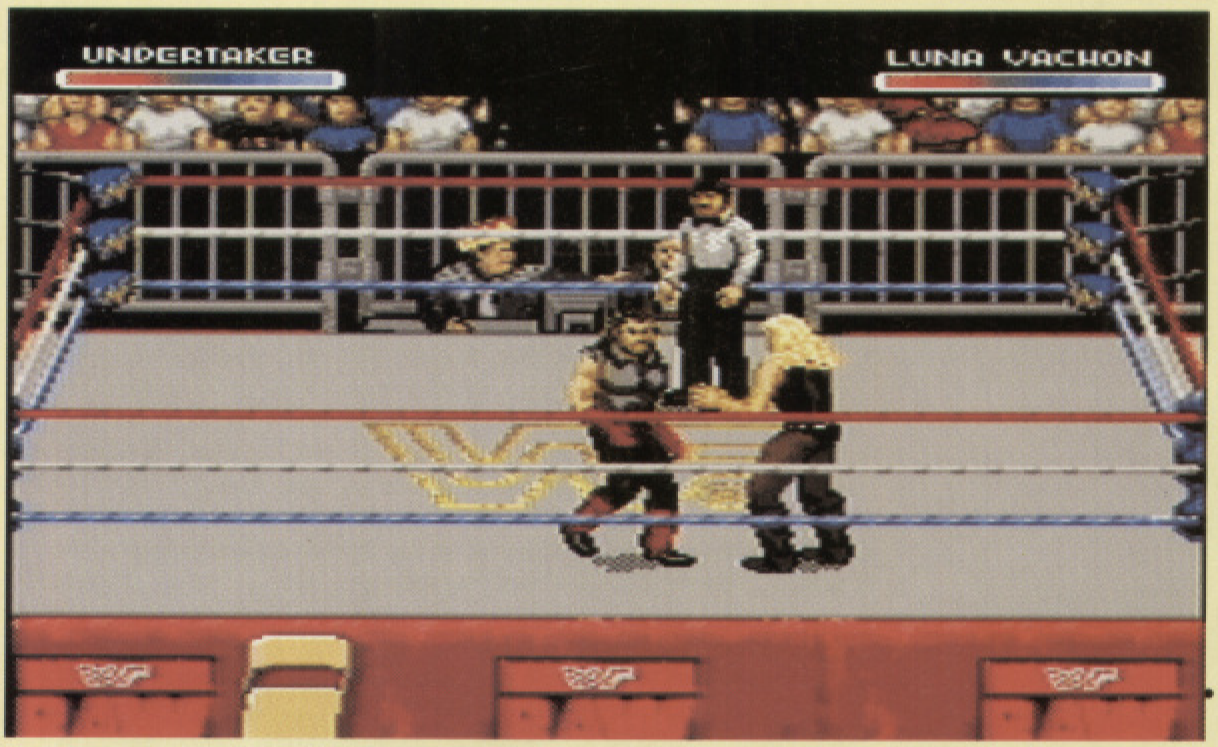




You're not finished by any manner of means. At least that woman stuck in Soleil Town should be able to enjoy just a tad more of the game. More next month, when we promise you some spectacular sights and our designers further headaches compiling the maps.

WWF MEGA-MOVES PLAYER'S GUIDE

Okay, okay! You can stop sending the letters demanding a full breakdown of all the Mega-Moves, we've got the message! So in time honoured MEAN MACHINES tradition here is the totally exclusive guide to every character in the game.



LUNA
PROPELLER SPLASH

Vein chops pulls off a death-defying splat on an unassuming rival by waiting until they are down on the canvas, and then hitting LEFT, DOWN, DOWN, and releasing B.



SECONDS OUT!

Before even attempting to pull off any of the moves, it is essential to know always hold down both the A and B buttons. Otherwise they just won't work! So 'der.

OWEN HART
WHIRLING DERVISH

There may not be enough room to swing a cat in the ring, but Owen finds the space to give both the ref and his foe a fairground ride they'll never forget. By pushing UP, RIGHT, DOWN, and releasing A while the two victims are standing, you can sit back and enjoy this to heart's content.

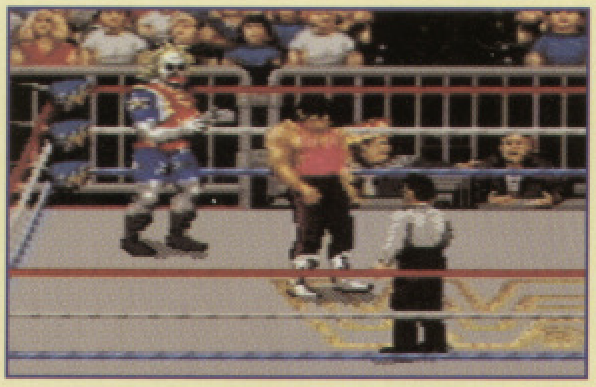
RAZOR RAMON
BACK FLIP ELBOW DROP

Razor sharp, he may be, but his Mega Back Flip Elbow Drop will only work if the enemy wrestler is lying down in the ring. When circumstances permit press LEFT, LEFT, RIGHT, and release B.



DOINK
FIELD GOAL KICK

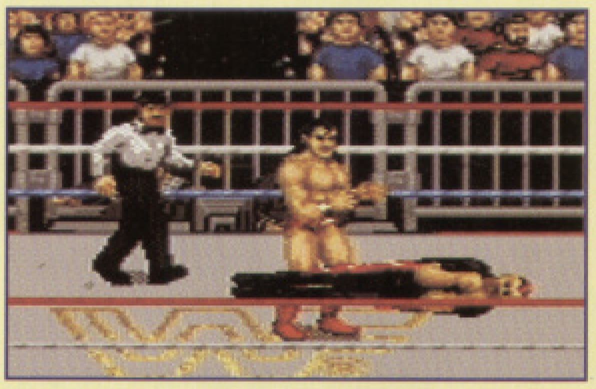
Clown antics ahoy when Doink's in the ring. To send the opposition into the end-zone, first stand behind a stunned challenger and perform the following — LEFT, LEFT, LEFT, and C. Touchdown!





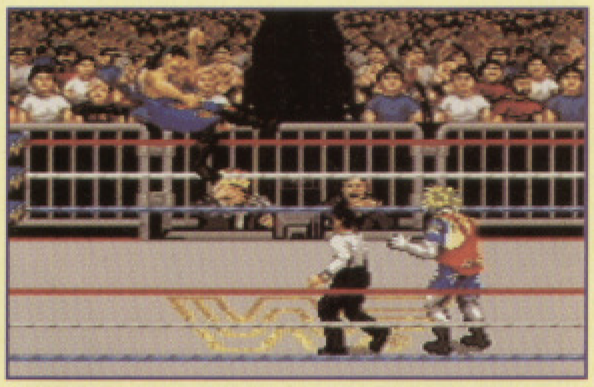
BAM BAM BIGELOW
TORPEDO

What does he think he looks like with daft old goatie? Tubby Bam Bam Bigelow is ready to torpedo any unsuspecting and standing bruiser. Simply press UP, DOWN, LEFT or RIGHT, and release A.



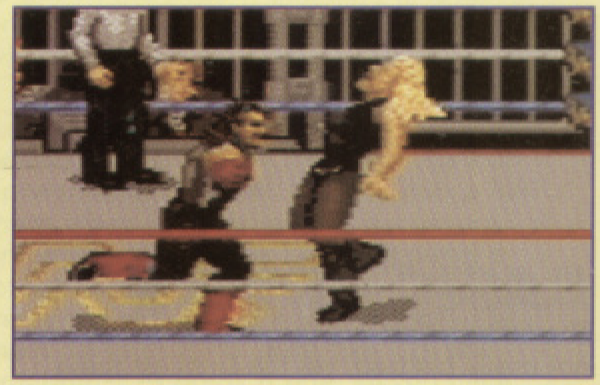
1-2-3 KID
TURNBUCKLE TO TURNBUCKLE JUMP

For a super flight of fancy from the whip-persnapper of the pack, get on top of one of the turnbuckles and tap UP, UP, UP, and release A or B.



UNDERTAKER
RUNNING CLOTHESLINE

Execution of the Undie's Running Clothesline is available when your opponent is vulnerable to attack in the ring. At this point hit LEFT, RIGHT, RIGHT, and release B.



BRET HART
BUTT FLIP

For Bret's leap off the turnbuckle, wait until the other wrestler is lying below you, climb the turnbuckle and press RIGHT, RIGHT, UP, and release B.



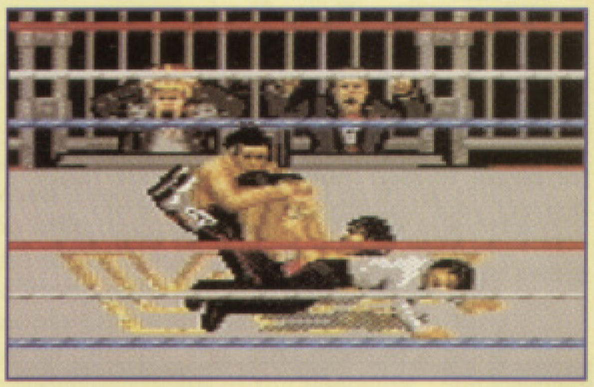
DIESEL
CABER TOSS

Och dunno! Diesel's highland inspired Mega-Move is performed by pressing DOWN, DOWN, RIGHT, and releasing B.



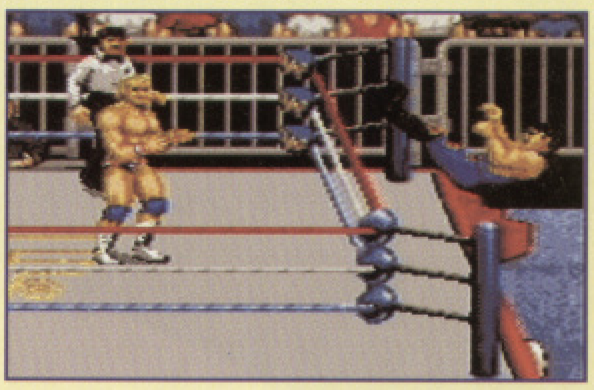
YOKOZUNA
CANNONBALL OFF TURN-BUCKLE

Position lardy on on of the turnbuckles and prepare for the Yokozuma cannonball. Press DOWN, DOWN, DOWN, and C for the maximum effect.



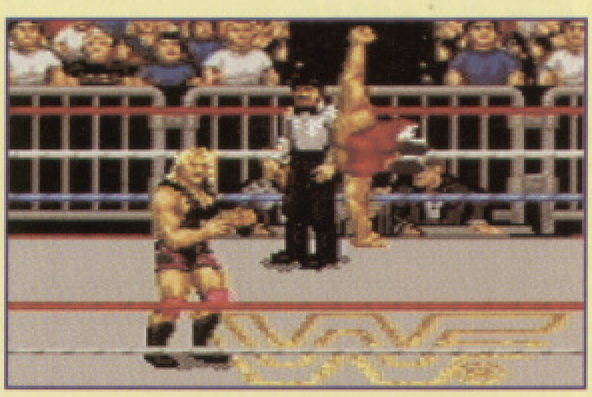
LEX LUGER
SUPER PUNCH

Witness the power of Lex Luger's Power Punch once you've got the receiving end within arm's length. Press UP, UP, DOWN, and release B.



SHAWN MICHAEL
SUPER DROP KICK

When your opponent is standing in the is standing in the ring within kicking range, hit RIGHT, RIGHT, and C for a Super Drop Kick.



Wasn't that fun, and didn't it look nice? Must have taken Claire ages to design, and she's left the tips-submeister with lots of lovely space to fill. There's more in WWF Raw to find, so check out future tips for further savoury bits..

BULLFROG'S GUID

Following last month's review, which left you in no doubt as to our thoughts of Bullfrog's creamy Theme Park conversion for Megadrive, we thought you might benefit from a few tips on how to get a successful park up and running. And who better to provide them than Bullfrog themselves, who have only been playtesting it for the last six months! Our thanks to Alex Trower's for these observations:

BASIC ADVICE

The little people are very fickle — they're not easily pleased, yet the smallest thing makes them unhappy very quickly. As a result, you must always listen to what they tell you. Keep an eye on their thought bubbles and react accordingly. Eg. If several people are hungry in the same area you should consider building a food stall of some description nearby. Likewise, if several people are upset about the cost of prizes of a stall then you should lower the price or raise the prize.

Don't try and build the most mammoth of parks on your first go. Start to build from a small but well-maintained base. That way you won't suddenly find yourself out of your depth with everything going wrong at once; it will happen gradually. Don't be afraid to remove rides that are placed incorrectly: It's far better to lose money on one ride than distract your valuable mechanics from repairing your star attraction so that it blows up with people on it.



RIDES

The park with the most rides makes the most money. Most rides bring in more punters, allowing more to be spent on research. The little people tend to prefer a large variety of rides as opposed to lots of identical ones. This doesn't mean you should have only one example of each ride per park, just that you should choose new over an existing ride whenever possible. As rides get older, the period of time between repairs decreases, increasing the workload on your mechanics. When this starts to happen, you should consider deleting the ride and replacing it with an upgraded one. This reduces the strain on your mechanics, increases the length of time the ride is in commission and keeps everyone happier.

SHOPS AND STALLS

One of the best sources of income is a well-placed shop or stall. They provide instant cash returns and also serve to keep the little people happy. There are, however, two potential drawbacks:

LITTER

Litter is the major problem as nobody likes a messy park. If too much litter accumulates then the little people begin to stay away from the park, and you certainly will fare less well in awards at the end of the year. Whenever you open a new food unit, you should make sure you have sufficient handymen to combat the litter problem.

RIP-OFFS

Stalls can be a very lucrative method of gaining cash. They can also upset little people who feel they have been conned. Try to match the prize with the cost of each game if they start to feel that way. Don't try to fleece the punters as they quickly cotton on and stop coming. A low cost game coupled with a modest prize and moderate chance of winning is a more stable income-earner than a risky high cost, high prize, low chance stall.

One advantage of stalls is that they don't create litter like shops, and entertain people into the bargain (though not as much as rides). Being smaller than rides, they usefully slot into the smaller spaces in your layout. People tend to not have repeated goes at the same stall, so as with rides, variety is the key to success.

FEATURES

Features such as trees, fences and lakes should never be underestimated. A featureless park is a bland one and unlikely to win any awards. Features also impress the little people who are new to the park as well, making it look nice onscreen as well. It makes a ride like the rollercoaster much more exciting to be screaming through a dense forest, narrowly missing trees.



STAFF

The amount and type of staff you employ at any one time can make or break your park. As soon as you start placing shops that produce litter you should start employing a Handyman. Likewise as soon as your first ride breaks down you should employ a mechanic. Entertainers are very good especially in the times where most of your rides are being repaired or it is raining. For a slightly more detailed look at staff:

HANDYMEN

New handymen should be watched to see if they become confused by your path layout, as they may end up missing large areas of the park.

MECHANICS

Mechanics should be hired as soon as your first ride starts smoking. They spend half of their life eating sandwiches, so it's worth keeping an eye on them. More often than not a mechanic will get to a nearby damaged ride before it completely blows up, but if more than one ride is in trouble then you should direct the mechanic to fix one immediately, shutting the other one down until he has finished. Another, riskier, strategy is to shut the speed of a ride right down while the mechanic fixes the other



one. The upside of this is the need for fewer mechanics, and always having at least one of your rides on line. Although, if this strategy goes wrong, it's disastrous One mechanic can, roughly speaking, maintain three or four rides single-handedly, but this varies with the age of the ride and how heavily it is used.

E TO THEME PARK



ENTERTAINERS
Entertainers should be placed near queues that have a particularly long wait time to ease the stress caused by waiting to get on the ride. In addition, at least one entertainer should be placed somewhere near the park entrance.

GUARDS
uards only need to be hired if thugs start appearing in the park. You will notice the thugs when you start seeing beaten-up entertainers and rides breaking down a lot faster than normal. Guards only escort thugs out of the park if they actually see them do something nasty, like kick an entertainer or break a ride, so you have to move your guards around a bit.

PARK LAYOUT



When designing a park try to think what the little people will want at any one time and place things accordingly. Eg. Place a balloon shop near the entrance so they people part with their money while they are still happy. This puts them in a good mood for the rest of their stay, or until something unpleasant happens.

ZIG ZAG
People get enjoyment out of going on rides and winning on stalls so try and cut the amount of time they spend walking between attractions. One method of doing this is to lay a straight path and have rides come off it on either side. Each ride is butted up against the side of the path, with an entrance at the back and an exit leading back onto the main path. A short queue links the entrance to the branch path. Stagger the ride on either side on the main path, so that a punter leaving one ride is facing towards the entrance of the next. In this way people zig zag between the rides and the amount of time they spend just walking and not being on a ride is minimal. The only drawback with this plan is that it doesn't leave enough room for decorative features which make the park look nice, which may put some people off.

SIGNPOST



If you opt to make a complex path system with rides and stalls all over the place then you will have to place signposts down so that people know where they are heading. If a person comes across a sign pointing to a ride they quite want to visit then they will feel happier walking towards it rather than just wandering around aimlessly. Also, signposts that point towards the exit allow annoyed people to leave quicker and not wander around for hours getting more upset. Unhappy people tend to not go on rides or buy things, so they just clutter up the park and reduce the average happiness of the park. As a result, your reputation and popularity suffer, so they are best off out of the park and out of your hair.

ONE WAY

Another method of park design is the one-way method. The park is organised in such a way that people have no choice but to walk around the park in an organised and orderly manner. This has advantages in that you should be able to work out what any person will be requiring at any one time and be ready for it. In addition, the need for signposts is greatly reduced as there are less junctions for people to worry about. The problems arise when too many people enter the park. Queues fill up and so people are unable to to get on all of the rides. Due to the one-way structure of the park they are unable to return to rides that may have been missed so they are not getting the full enjoyment factor out of your park.

GENERAL TIPS

Open your park immediately on starting the game. This allows one or two punters to appear even if most stay away.

Slow the game speed down when designing the park. This allows you more time to place rides and gives you some lee-way when playing.

New rides are vitally important so you should always have money in research. When positioning rides allow for the fact that you may wish to move the entrances and exits.

Whenever you add a new ride to the park put up your ticket price. The more rides you have, the more you can charge.

Try to buy new rides as they become available.

If you notice a lot of litter building up, it's a signal to increase the price of your food stalls. Don't forget to clean it all up afterwards though!

Try to ensure that the queue lengths are long enough to support all the people who may want to go on the ride. People won't join a full queue and so they will miss out on the ride.

Never leave your park unattended as there is always something to be done. This is especially true of the larger parks as they are harder to maintain.

Larger capacity rides need larger queuing areas as they take more people to fill up.

Do not have any unnecessary loans, to avoid paying interest.

Get more from your staff by manually moving them, rather than waiting for them to define problems.



TROUBLESHOOTER

MEAN MACHINES' own top five Theme Park tips:

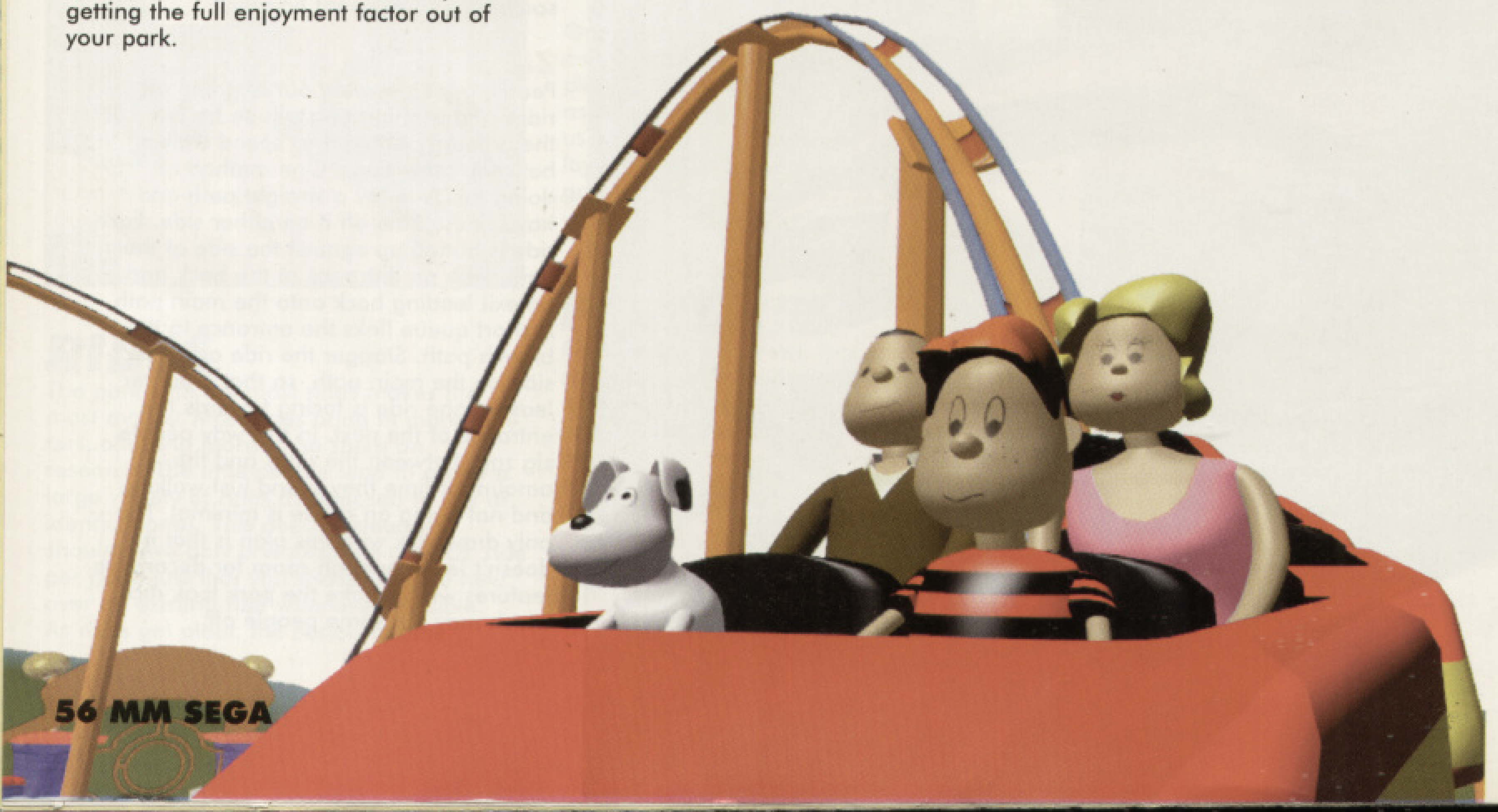
1. Exploding rides should be avoided at all costs, as they produce useless waster ground. Never ignore a smoking ride. Check how far a mechanic has to walk to repair the ride.

2. Upgrade to superloos as soon as possible, and have several groups of them around the park. Place you cleaning staff on the loos to make sure they go inside a clean them. Vomit around the toilets means dirty loos.

3. When you start, plough a very large amount into research — up to 2500 a month. This provides the money-spinning attractions early on, and while you have the cash to finance them.

4. In poorer economies, punters visit the park with much less disposable income. Check the profiles to see how much they bring. There's no point placing expensive stalls like the saloon or gift shop if the punters can't afford the goods.

5. Solve your negotiations as quickly as possible, as staff and suppliers demand more and more with each renegotiation. Also, your stall prices rise automatically with supply increases. Always check they are roughly 50-100% higher than the cost price.




ASA ☑
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ON ADS
THE ADVERTISING STANDARDS AUTHORITY 2 TORRINGTON PLACE LONDON WC1E 7HW



DAYTONA USA

1 PLAYERS

GAME TYPE
RACING

PRICE	IMPORT
BY	SEGA
RELEASE	NOW

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: NONE
SKILL LEVELS: 5
RESPONSIVENESS: DIFFICULT
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD

1ST DAY SCORE
7th (track 1, normal setting)

ORIGIN
Programmed by AM2, from their own Model 2 CG board coin-op, Daytona USA; world famous and rather tasty.

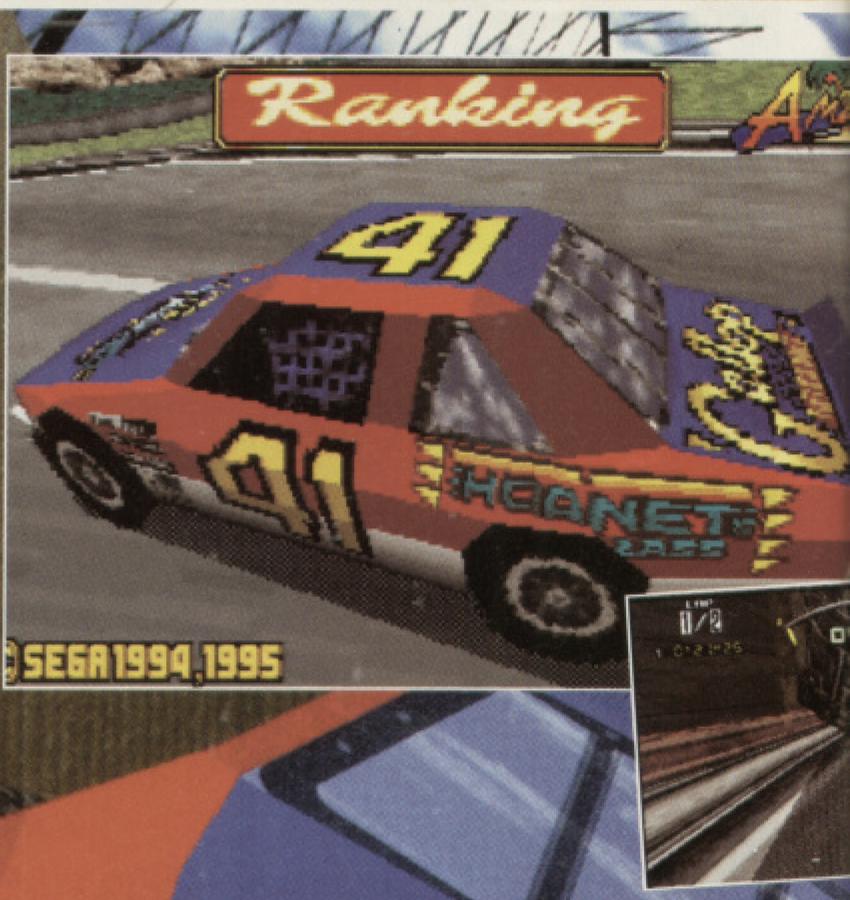
GAME BREAKDOWN
ORIGINALITY
REFLEXES
CHALLENGE
ACTION
STRATEGY

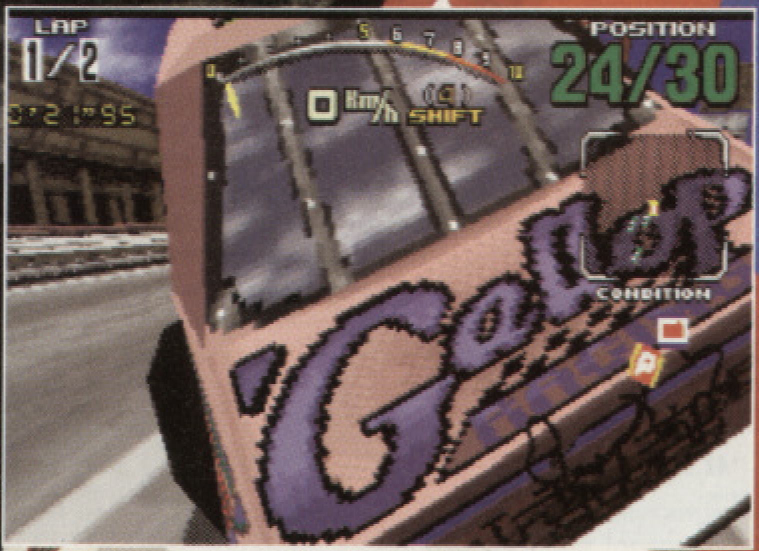
GAME AIM
The same principle as any other racing game. Complete the course in the fastest time possible (against 39 other racers!).

It's here. Few jewels shone as bright in Sega's crown as the Daytona coin-op. It is to Virtua Racing what Virtua Racing was itself to Super Monaco GP. And it's arrival on the Saturn was anticipated for many reasons.

First, it's the ultimate benchmark test for the machine: replicating £16,000 worth of custom arcade RAM technology within a flexible, £400 CD-based home machine. The comparison is also with Sony's Playstation, competing in price and spec, the Playstation showed it could handle Namco's Ridge Racer arcade game with credit — indeed, many prefer the Playstation version to the coin-op. Fortunate: as it is the only half decent game for the machine to date. The Saturn's task is greater — a larger and faster game, and one where the details seem almost as important as the main game itself.

But Daytona has been anticipated for altogether better reasons — it's an excellent game. Everything comes together in a feast of speed, a timely reminder that video games can still occasionally astound, even move, their players.





ROLLING! ROLLING! ROLLING!

Races are set underway by a series of lights, grand prix style, apart from Short Oval's notorious 'Rolling Start!'. Prior to the race you see the field zoom into the final straight, with an enthusiastic Sting imitator singing in the rolling start, allowing you to begin the race at top whack.



▲ *'Rolling Start' it howls. Get ready.*



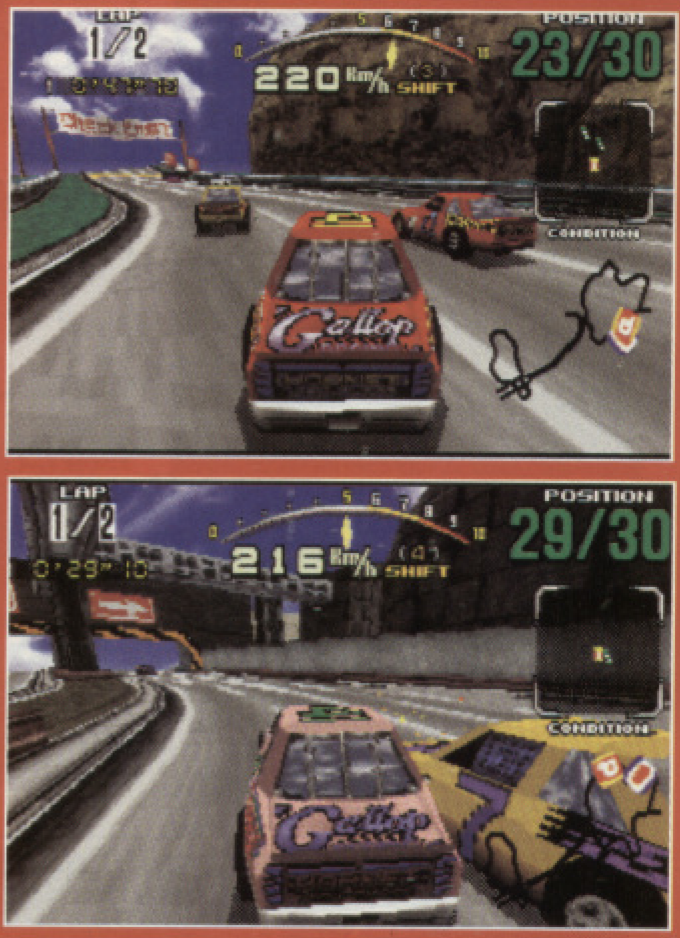
▲ *That's you now, that is.*

DAYTONA USA



CAR WARS

You never forget you're part of a competition in Daytona, with the sheer number of opposition cars. These lack the fine detail of your own Hornet Gallop, but if you come close enough you can make out the sponsors' labels, even the webbing in the window. On the first course there are no less than forty simultaneous competitors crowding a narrow track. The second offers a more manageable race roster of thirty, and a positively sparse final track has twenty in the line-up

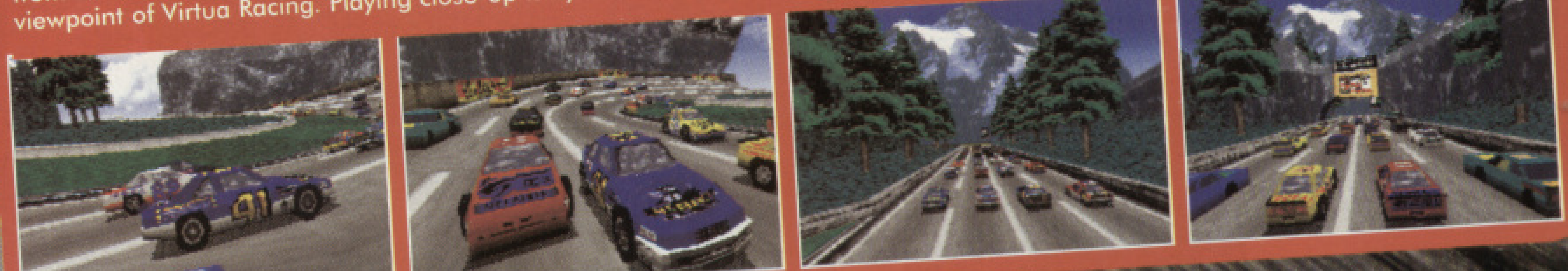


▲ *You'd better ring the Royal.*



LOOKS THAT KILL

In common with other Sega polygon games, there are a choice of four 'Virtua' viewing positions. Like Virtua Racing, these range from Driver's eye positions to well behind the car. However, the furthest of these is not quite as high as the spectacular panoramic viewpoint of Virtua Racing. Playing close-up is by far the most pant-wetting.



SHORT OVAL 777

The easiest track of almost ludicrous simplicity (you don't need to turn right). The track has a gambling theme, and actually has the outline of a gaming table. The choice track when you're getting to grips with controls.



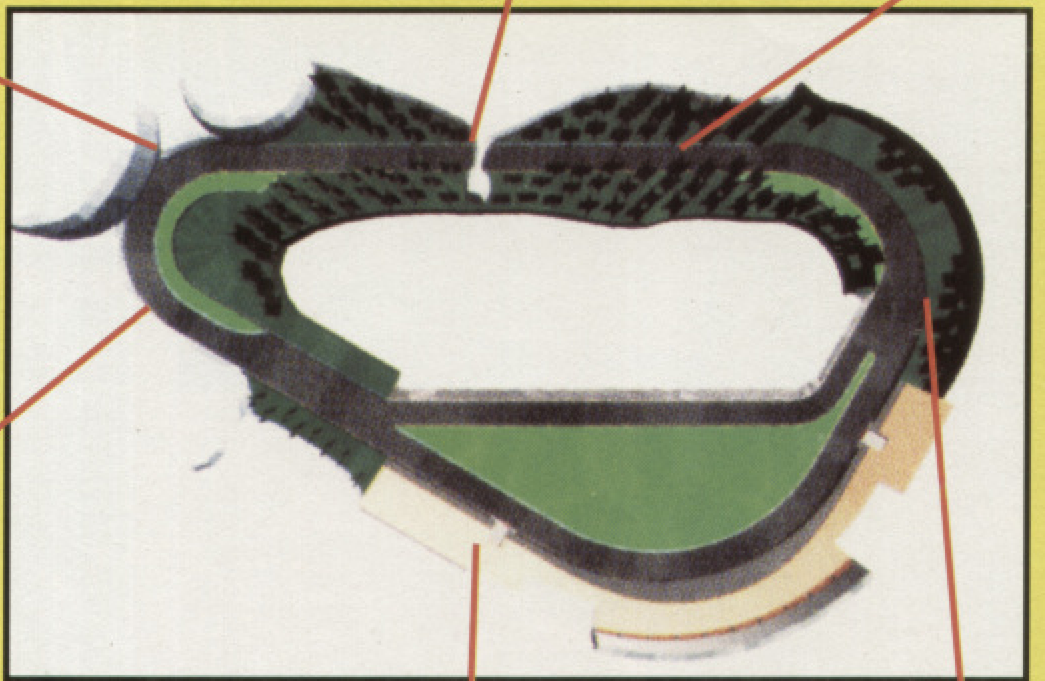
Million Slot Arch



Royal Straight

Sonic Wall





Billiards Crash



DAYTONA USA™

Main Stand

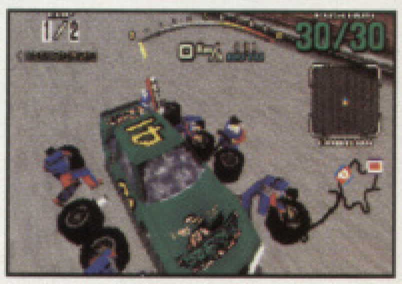


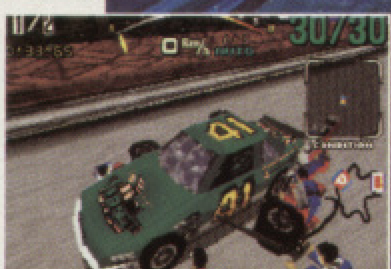
Roulette Curve





▲ ***Daytona remove their feet at birth so that they can't run away and are always on hand to change tyres.***





PIT BULL

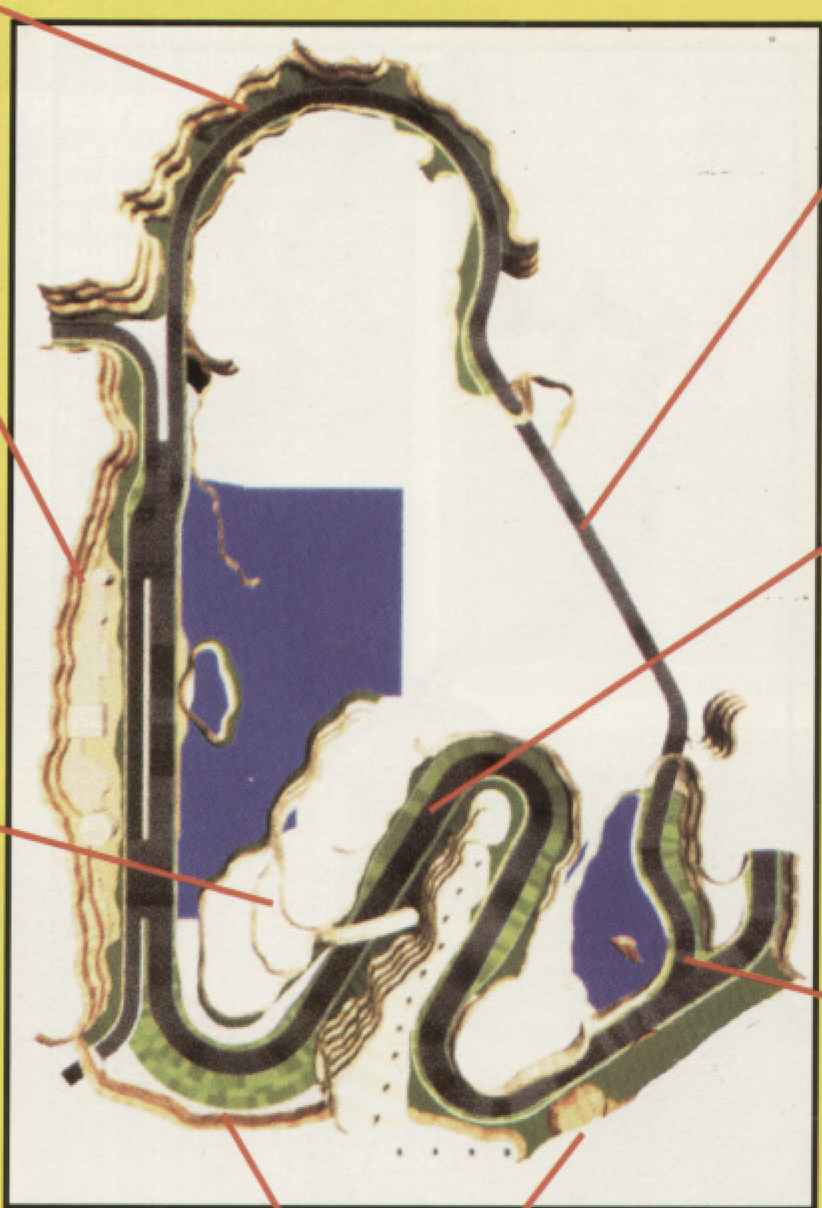
Swerve into any of the three courses' pit lanes, and you're treated to a marvellous display of precision mechanics. The view pans over the crew as they change your tyres. In the arcade this was all pretty superfluous, but the new Grand Prix and Endurance options in Saturn mode introduce much longer races of up to 80 laps, where pit technique becomes important. Spectacular crashes will also reduce your spanking lovemobile into a jittering wreck.



DINOSAUR CANYON

Inspired by Jurassic Park if anything, and it's monstrous. Everything comes in massive scale, with a huge straight, a preposterous hairpin a vast tunnel and a sweeping final bank.

DAYTONA USA™



Brachio Curve.



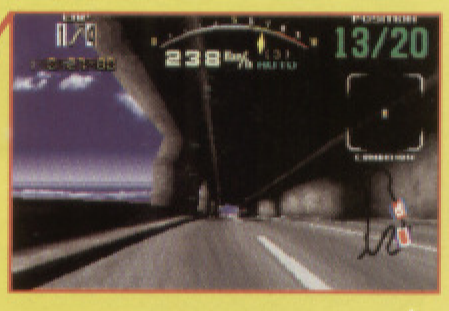
Ruins of Jura



Brontosaur's tail



Tyranno Tunnel



Stego Slope



Plesiosaur's Head



Fossils of Dragon



Ptera Power Station

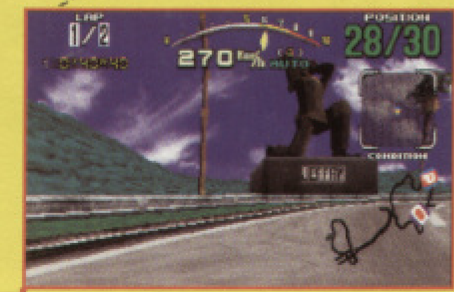




SEA GALAXY

Quite where the connection between oceans and star systems is made is beyond us. Suffice to say that this course is utterly hellish to negotiate, many times more complex than the other two, a juxtaposed mixture of ancient mythology and high technology.

Statue of Jeffrey



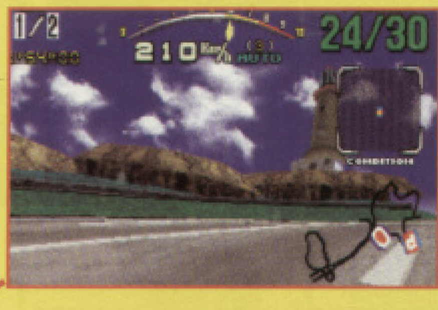
Cosmos Street



Video Wall



Moon Lighthouse



Cassiopeia City





Freeway



Space Shuttle



Starlight Bridge



Planet Harbour

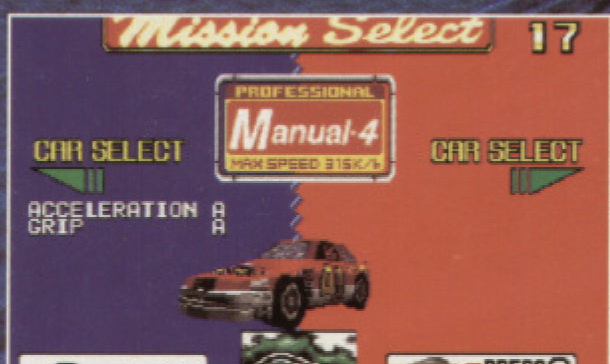




DAYTONA USA™

A NEST OF HORNETS

The game's arcade mode offers you a single choice of manual or automatic for the liveried Hornet Gallop, a top little car capable of 315km/h. Play in the Saturn mode and a further choice of cars, with better handling and acceleration is possible. Win any of the races and further pink, green and multi-coloured editions of your car become available.





COMMENT



GUS

There's been a lot of comment over Daytona since it arrived, both good and bad. For some, it's not as good as they had hoped, with some poor presentational details, and the major let-down of the background clipping (see box). However, let's get this into perspective — £16,000 of kit more than successfully shrunk into a single CD. Daytona still looks fabulous, runs faster than anyone can easily handle, and gamely incorporates most of the features of the coin-op. The sense of movement is amazing, and the sheer number of competitors makes every race a huge battle. The control takes a lot of getting used to, with a definite resistance to steering commands. Another major aggravation is the sound. Only the first track music is any good, and there's no way to turn off the others. Minor gripes aside, Daytona is a fantastic package, and the second purchase to get with your Saturn after Virtua Fighter.

COMMENT



STEVE

Right, first of all, no this isn't arcade-perfect. However, the Saturn version of Daytona plays every bit as well as the coin-op, and has all the tracks and features of the original. However, it is a certain roughness to the graphics which let things down. The backdrop clipping is very hard on the eye, and gives the indication that the game was rushed as all the mountains and bridges appear from nowhere. Even so, arcade fans will be more than chuffed with this, and Daytona is still the cream of the Saturn crop.

CLIPPETY COP OUT

The biggest matter of debate surrounding Daytona is its clipping, a phenomenon you won't pick up from the screenshots. Clipping occurs where elements of the background that are not yet meant to be in view are hidden. The problem is when large objects appear noticeably late, or worse, where large features, eg the Sonic Wall, appear in bits. It's a messy process which detracts from the graphics and the game overall, and will be noticed by even undiscerning games player.s







MIRROR, MIRROR...

The flipside courses of the Mirror Mode doubles the number of tracks in Daytona. It's barely hidden, with the Start button flipping the tracks across in Saturn mode. A time trial, raced without opposition is also accessible, by holding start on the transmission screen.

GRAPHICS — 92

▲+Fully textured, incredibly fast 3D creates the most convincing racing atmosphere ever.
▼Larger elements of complex background are badly handled by the Saturn.

SOUND — 86

▲The sound effects are mostly brilliant and the first music is thumpin'.
▼Listening to the other manic warblings is a trial.

PLAYABILITY — 92

▲Grabs you by the steering wheel and doesn't let go. Amazing speed and response.
▼The harder tracks put you off a bit.

LASTABILITY — 91

▲Daytona's classic status is assured, People will be queuing up to play it for weeks to come.

VFM — 81

▲If you gotta have it, you gotta have it.
▼The import price is still scandalous and it's not a flawless conversion.

OVERALL — 92

Daytona USA is Daytona USA. Don't let the doubters put you off a stunning conversion of the world's greatest racer.



1-2 PLAYERS

16 MEG

GAME TYPE
FOOTY SIM

PRICE	£44.95
BY	US GOLD
RELEASE	JULY

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOYPAD
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: VERY GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE

1ST DAY SCORE
Beat fifth tournament team

ORIGIN
FIFA meets real life, as US Gold introduce a bunch of recognisable 'characters' to the sport.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Using whatever means necessary, get that ball in the back of your opponent's net. Go on, give 'em a slap...

Fever Pitch





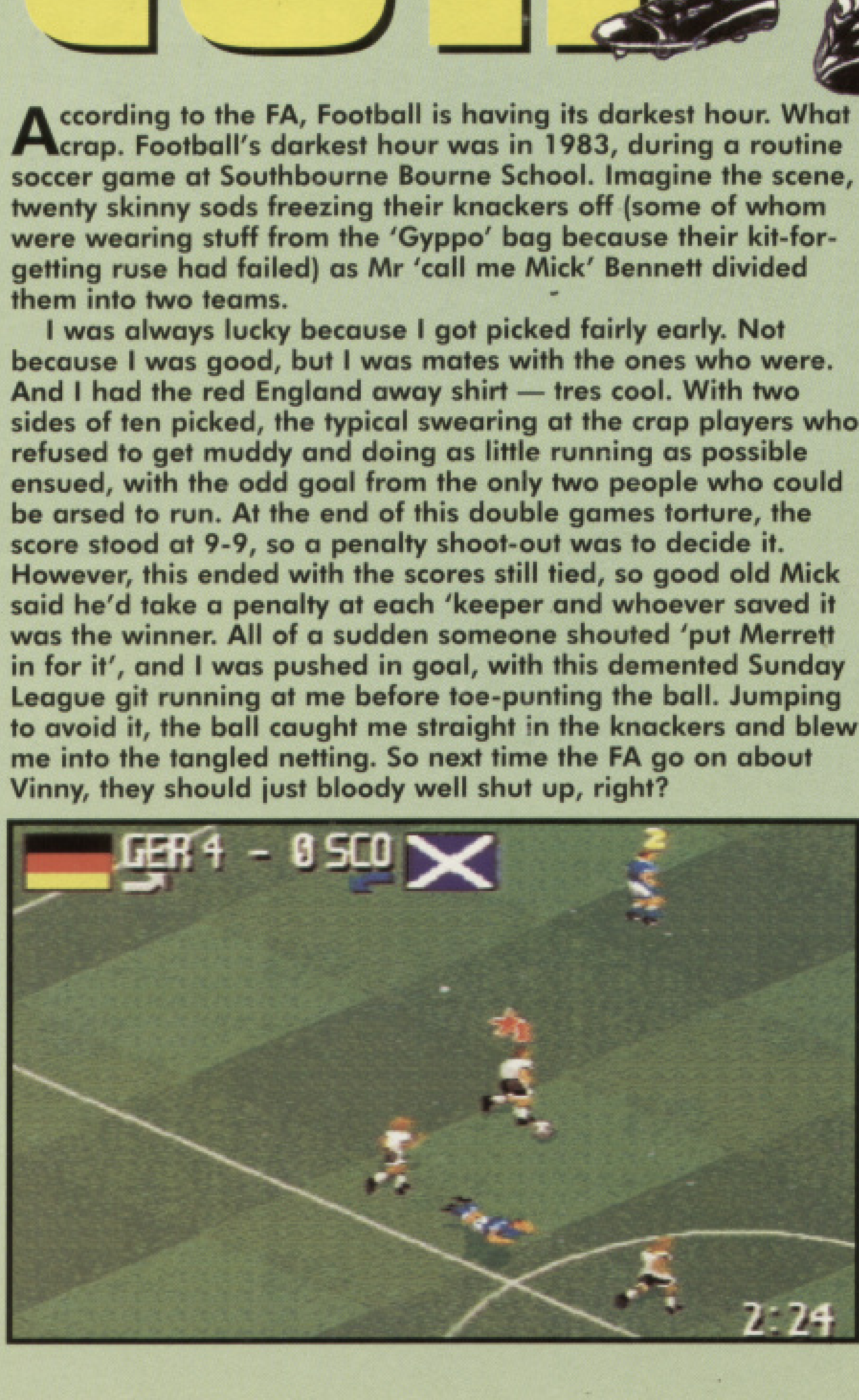




▲ ***We at Mean Machines sincerely hope you get a feel for US Gold's fab new footy game from the assortment of pictures above. Thank you.***

According to the FA, Football is having its darkest hour. What crap. Football's darkest hour was in 1983, during a routine soccer game at Southbourne Bourne School. Imagine the scene, twenty skinny sods freezing their knackers off (some of whom were wearing stuff from the 'Gyppo' bag because their kit-forgetting ruse had failed) as Mr 'call me Mick' Bennett divided them into two teams.

I was always lucky because I got picked fairly early. Not because I was good, but I was mates with the ones who were. And I had the red England away shirt — tres cool. With two sides of ten picked, the typical swearing at the crap players who refused to get muddy and doing as little running as possible ensued, with the odd goal from the only two people who could be arsed to run. At the end of this double games torture, the score stood at 9-9, so a penalty shoot-out was to decide it. However, this ended with the scores still tied, so good old Mick said he'd take a penalty at each 'keeper and whoever saved it was the winner. All of a sudden someone shouted 'put Merrett in for it', and I was pushed in goal, with this demented Sunday League git running at me before toe-punting the ball. Jumping to avoid it, the ball caught me straight in the knackers and blew me into the tangled netting. So next time the FA go on about Vinny, they should just bloody well shut up, right?







▲ Emo's incredible ball-burner shot is impossible to save from close range. That was an informal message from a tired Editor. Can I go now?

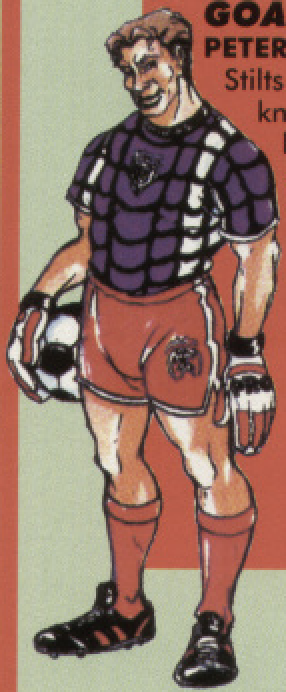






THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE ON THE PITCH...

Fever Pitch's eight star players offer a variety of skills, effected with the press of a button. Let's take a look at the team in full.



GOALKEEPER
PETER STILTON: Stilts may be knocking on a bit, but his agility is famed throughout the game.



DEFENDER
MARCO RIGATONI: Stickier than one of those bogies that whistles when you breathe, Marco can turn a defensive situation around immediately.



DEFENDER
BARRY BARGER: Bazza's huge frame means he can steamroller attackers with ease. When Barger's on the ball, only fools try to get it off him.



MIDFIELD
PETER PARKER: A superb passer of the ball, Parker can create goal-scoring opportunities from seemingly nowhere.



WINGER
DICKY DISCO-RAMA: Supreme ball control allows this Colombian dynamo to whizz over outstretched legs with ease before crossing in.



STRIKER
ERNIE CONTAINER: Bends a ball better than Uri Geller mangles cutlery. Can send a ball right around the diving 'keeper with ease.



STRIKER
EMO BIKOMOZO: Emo's incredible shot strength actually ignites the ball, making close-range shots virtually impossible to save.



WINGER
JERGEN GDIVERMAN: The oldest player in the team, but by far the best actor. Dives at the slightest provocation, with a 20% chance of success of getting a penalty in the box!

COMMENT



STEVE

FIFA, yeah, it's good and all that, but let's face it — it's really, really slooooow! Even the updated FIFA '95 plods along a bit, and you still don't feel in complete control, despite the new passing move. Then along comes Fever Pitch. Although its addition of footy star characters seems a bit of a gimmick, the bare bones of action is far, far better than that of the EA game. The wingers are fast, tackles are crunching, and shooting is never a hit or miss affair — you can even make the most of goalie mistakes. In fact, Fever Pitch drops on FIFA from a great height, and bridges the gap between the EA game's superb graphics and Sensi's speed perfectly. Every aspect of the game is a treat, with loads of neat passing, the well-placed star players, and fast and well animated sprites, and whilst it takes a while to get to grips with the plentiful controls, perseverance brings its own rewards. If I have to level a gripe at Fever Pitch, though, it's that it lacks a little depth. Just as Sensi and FIFA get a little tedious after a dozen or so games, Fever reveals most of its moves in the first few games (including some smart set-pieces), whereas Super NES owners have Konami's International Superstar Soccer which is constantly adding new possibilities to the basic game. Even so, Fever Pitch plays current Megadrive champ, FIFA off the pitch by a long margin, making it seem slow and dated, and pushing US G's game to the top of the Megadrive premiership. Even if the digitised speech does sound like someone holding their nose.

OOH, DID'YA SEE THAT?

To put none-too-fine a point on it, fouling is an integral part of Fever Pitch. The in-game ref is an invisible deity who obviously floats somewhere above the pitch looking for misdemeanours, but it still proves rather easy to lay out an opponent currently in possession rather than delicately win the ball from them. Much as the FA would disapprove, pulling off a successful foul is extremely satisfying, with the stricken sprite sent flying across the screen before rolling around in agony. Similarly, a well-timed shove can also make or break a match, as if you're struggling to retain a 1-0 lead with just seconds on the clock and your opponent is about to shoot, you've got nothing to lose by pushing them over!



TIME WASTING

Fever Pitch's programmers have put the emphasis on arcade playability, stating that they hate the way time is wasted in the likes of Sensi and FIFA before you can take a throw in or corner. As such, no sooner has the ball gone out of play in Fever Pitch, a player is set up to throw or kick it back into touch. With goal kicks treated in the same manner, this means that the only stoppages needed in the game are for injury time and setting up free kicks.



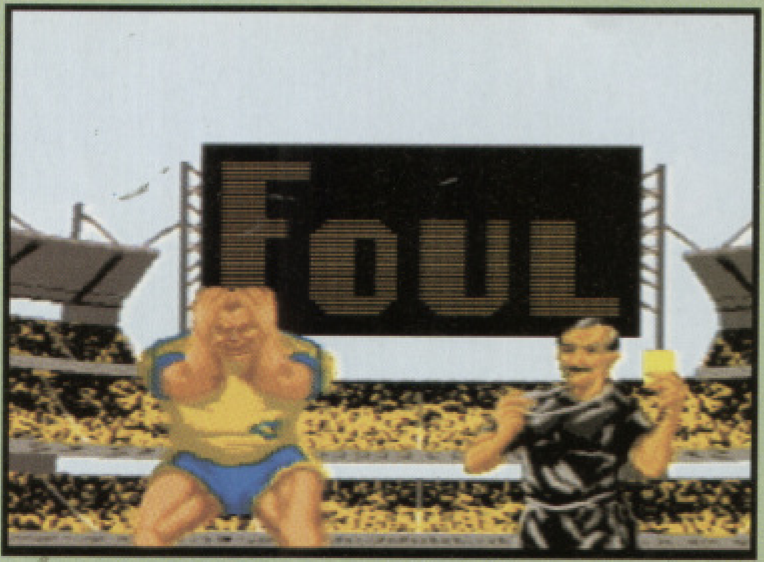




CONTROL FREAK

Fever Pitch can be played using either a three or six-button pad. Using combinations of the buttons and the Dpad, your players can be made to lob, chip, punt and cross the ball, with a button used for each. However, if you are currently not in possession, their uses switch to those of sliding kicks, sticking a hopeful leg out (and hopefully tapping an opponent's shin as they go by), or blatantly fouling anyone in your path. Using the star players' moves, though, is simply down to pressing the B button which will send Tricky and co skipping of stomping towards goal.







COMMENT



When US Gold first brought Fever Pitch to our attention (in typically in-yer-face manner) I thought they were brave indeed to foist yet another football game on Megadrive owners (recalling their World Cup effort). Thankfully, Fever Pitch gets it right where that game, and many others have failed. It's the essence of pick up and play, with simple controls, minimum interuptions and none of the kitchen-sink options bollocks that normally take up precious memory. Unlike FIFA it's fast and furious, and unlike Striker it's got a touch of finesse and mastery of controls. Once you get to recognise the star players and cheat like hell, you'll be having all sorts of fun. It's more like bloodsports than team sports, but definitely the best of its kind.

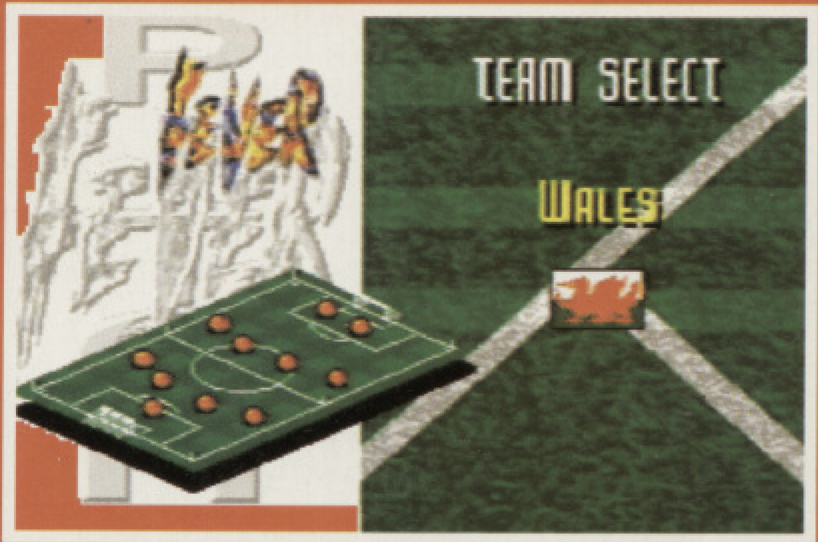


MAKE ME AN OFFER

So, just how do you recruit the likes of Barger and Tricky to your would-be world champions? Playing the game in its tournament mode, your chosen international squad are dropped to the bottom of the international league and left to scrap it out with the likes of Iraq, Kuwait and the Arab Emirates. Every time you beat one of these teams, you are given a password and the option to add a star player to your squad. Initially, these are mainly marking heroes like Mr Rigatoni for your midfield, but eventually you'll find the Containers and Bargers queuing to join your eleven.



▲ *Gdiverman, Gdiverman does whatever a Gdiver can.*



GRAPHICS 85

▲FIFA-style sprites, with the star players instantly recognisable. A good variety of play surfaces, too.
▼A few more 'frills', such as rippling nets and more intermission pics, would have been nice.

SOUND 43

▲The tackles sound as if they really hurt!
▼The rest is absolutely awful. Dire effects and lispy sound effects.

PLAYABILITY 92

▲Extremely easy to pick up. There are loads of moves, but the joypad is used intelligently to get the most out of them. It's a good feeling when you get to grips with the star players, too.

LASTABILITY 87

▲The tournament is tough, with even the Arab Emirates putting up a fight.
▼The actual match action soon proves a little limited

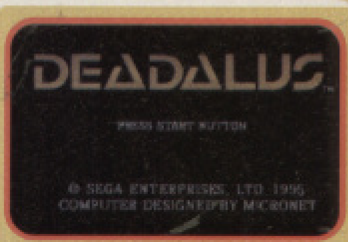
VFM 90

▲The same price as FIFA '95, but far better in every respect.

OVERALL 90

Shock! Horror! Fever Pitch in better than FIFA shocker! It's faster, more controllable, and infinitely more playable. 'Nuff said?

DEADA



1 PLAYERS

GAME TYPE
3-D BLASTER

PRICE IMPORT (£90)

BY MICRONET

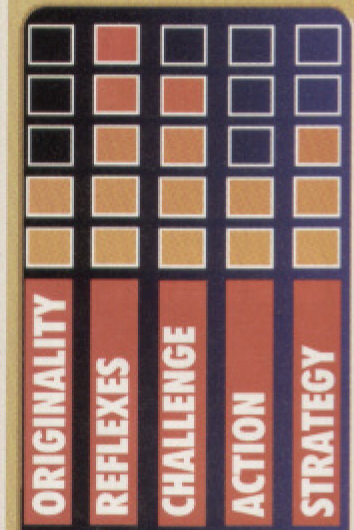
RELEASE OUT NOW

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: OK
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD

1ST DAY SCORE
LEVEL 10

ORIGIN
Obviously inspired by Doom and the current slough of 3D maze blasters.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Infiltrate all levels of the space station Deadalus, destroying robot defenders and kitting out your unit.

2077 AD was a year of note for two reasons. There were centenary celebrations for Virginia Wade's victory at Wimbledon in the women's singles, and secondly, world civilisation went to pot. British tennis might have been beyond salvation, but world leaders gamely set about wresting the world from anarchy by building a huge mechanised space station called Deadalus, that would enforce peace through a rigid code of civil conduct. And it worked. Society became so ordered that decades later, some people got rather bored with Deadalus intervening in their affairs. A radical new force of freedom terrorists (s'you) plans to reform the world order, and the destruction of Deadalus itself is their first daring operation.





CORRIDORS OF POWER

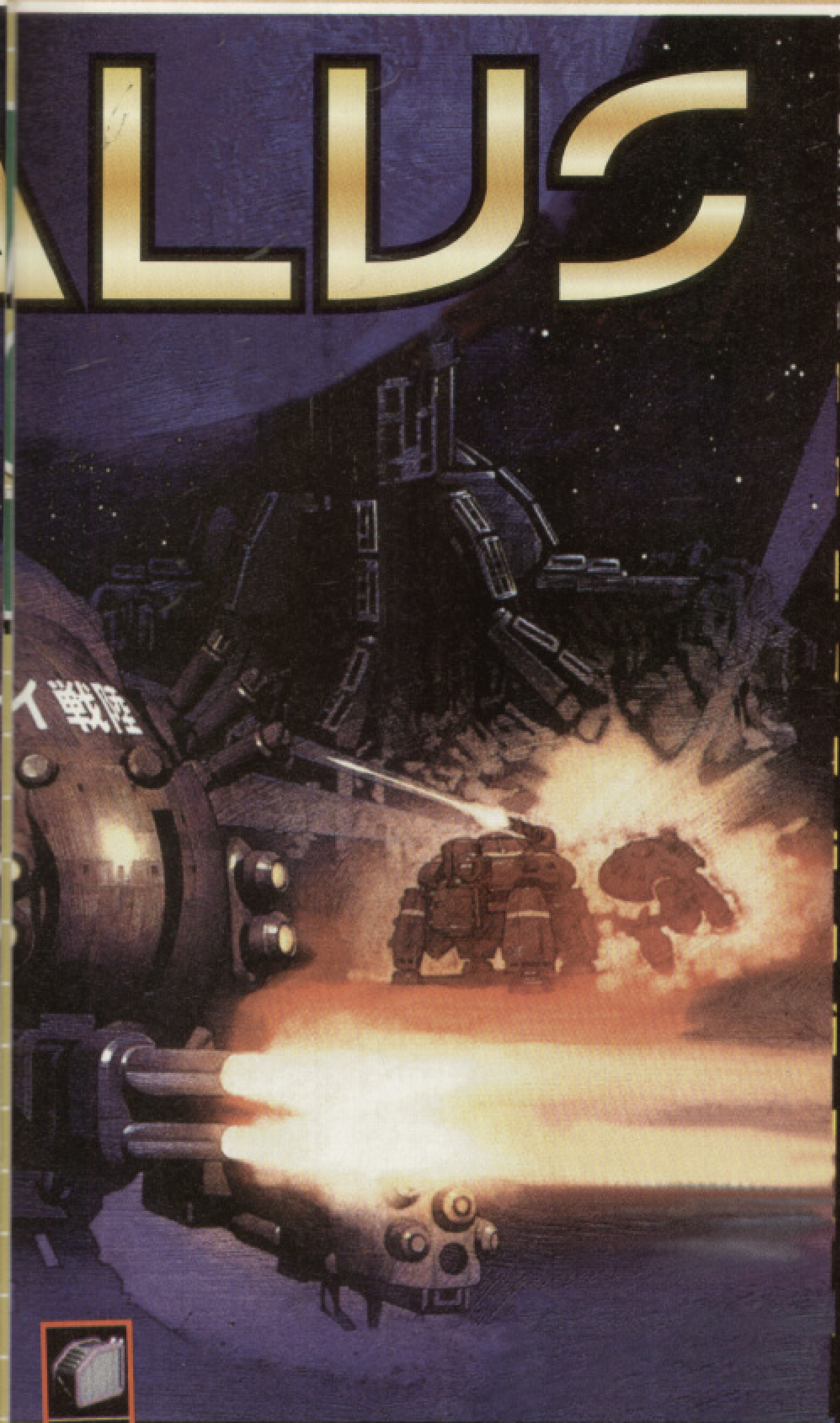
Deadalus may have got its name from the master craftsman of Greek legend. Working for King Minos of Crete he created the labyrinth used to keep the gruesome minotaur. Deadalus is in essence a torturous maze. Each floor consists of a series of sealed chambers linked by corridors. There is only one exit and a key is required to access future levels. Map fans are thwarted by each level being randomly generated, so that each game, or even level, are never the same twice.












LAOCORN


QA-254


AR-001


VN-884


GPX-42

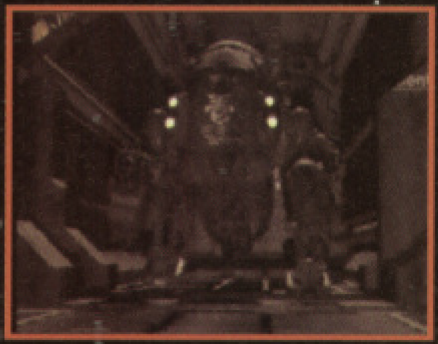

EGG-072


SA777


VLM-45

DEUS EX MACHINA

Deadalus acts as god over a variety of machinery. All are attuned to your destruction. You'll come to recognise robot types and their attack methods. Some fire quickly, others ram, and others will only attack when you approach. Deadalus tracks your progress and you will encounter more robots if you retrace your steps. If you take too long to find the exit a vicious hunter-type robot, the bugsweeper, is unleashed.



▲ *'I'm a mean metal mutha from outer space...oh yeah!'*

COMMENT


GUS

Deadalus is a tricky one. It's definitely not a great game, but perhaps an okay one. Every session leaves you thinking you've had enough, but a few hours later and you feel the urge to go further. In its favour is the excellent presentation — with a fabulously arranged display and an effective atmosphere, largely created by the music. The problem is the random level generation. It makes them all pretty samey, and laborious to trudge through. These parts, the majority of the game, feature pretty simplistic gameplay. Much more interesting are the levels with a clear. Deadalus would also have benefitted from more imposing enemies. . Putting its weaknesses aside, it works to a degree on a simple reflex blaster level.



KIT BAG

Your LAOCORN attack unit is not short of clip-ons and gun mounts. There are four standard weapons: Vulcan cannon, Laser cannon, Missile, and Arm punch. The first three of these have limited magazines that must be replenished with clips lying around and others gained from dead enemies. The arm weapon is a limitless close-range attack to use when your ammunition is exhausted. Weapons may be powered up to varying potentials, that increases their potency, and the amount of ammunition that can be carried.





▲ *Flamin' nora (no, flaming XJ2243 actually).*

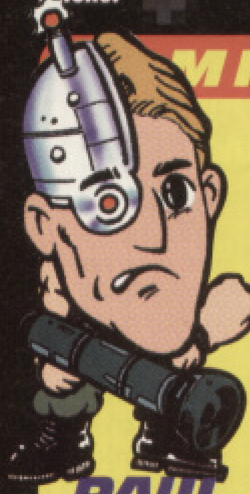






▲ More alien metal reduced to smoke.

MMENT

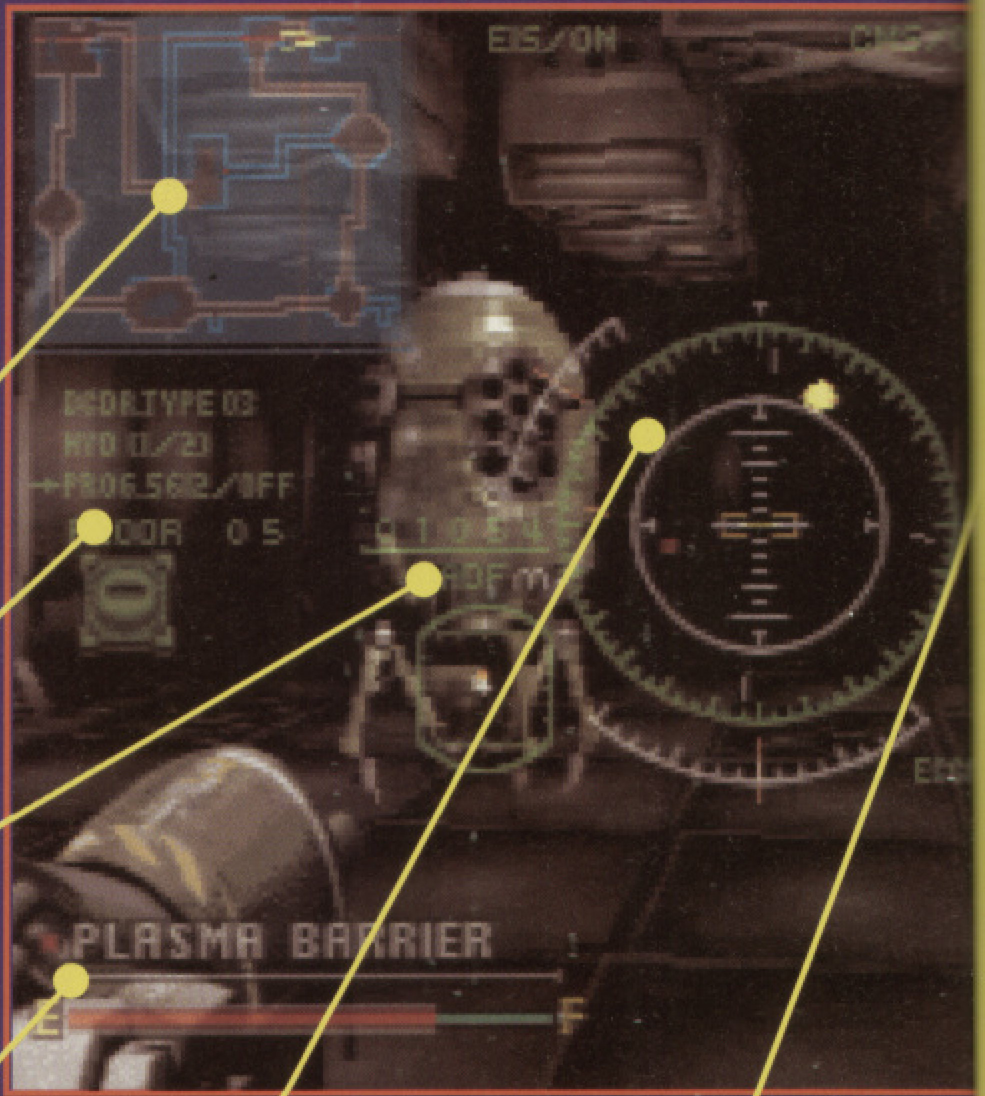


PAUL

Developers seem to have Doom on the brain, but few ideas beyond the basic 3D maze blaster. Deadalus competes with Doom in the visual department, but lacks the depth of gameplay to match it. After skimming round a few levels, it's apparent that there's no more to do than find the key and the exit. Unlike the cleverly designed Doom, the levels are literally slotted together from basic blocks, making some ludicrously short and others laboriously long. Your weapons are all dull and uninspiring, even after repeated power-ups. Pity 'bout all that, because as you see, Deadalus could have been a stunner, but like so many before, it failed to capitalise. For £90 - forget it.

PANEL FLANNEL

Deadalus presents you with the most complex on-screen display seen in a game of this type. But it's all quite simple when you know your way around:



MAP
Blue areas remain uninvestigated.

KEY
Icon lit when collected.

CLOSE RANGE RADAR
Reveals target positions in 360 degrees.

GENERATOR
Indicates chosen functions and energy level.

TARGET
Sights, doubling as compass

SHIELD
Remaining power.

CHINA SYNDROME

The random levels are interrupted by fixed tasks. The first of these involves disabling Deadalus' four power reactors by shooting out their cores.







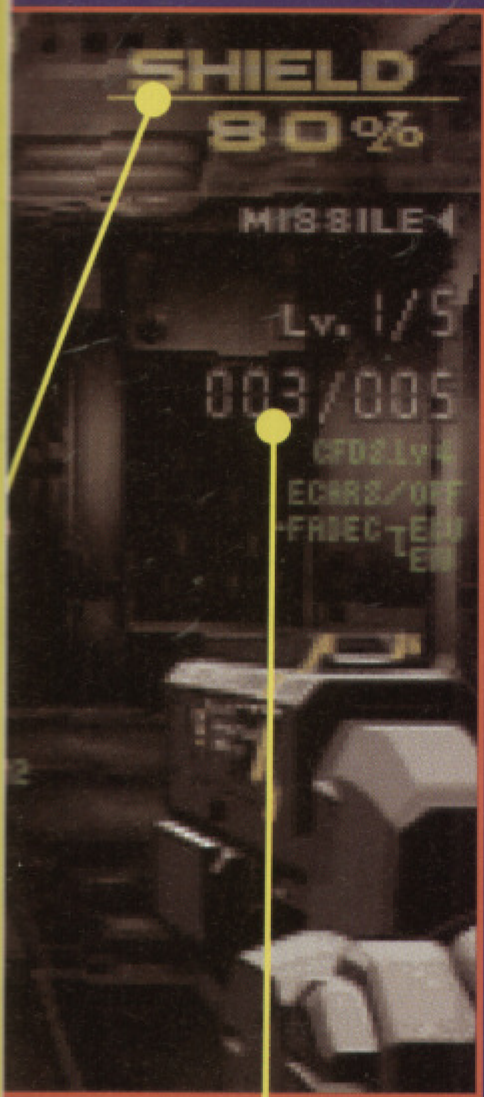
▲ It's like a scene from one of those 70's heist movies.

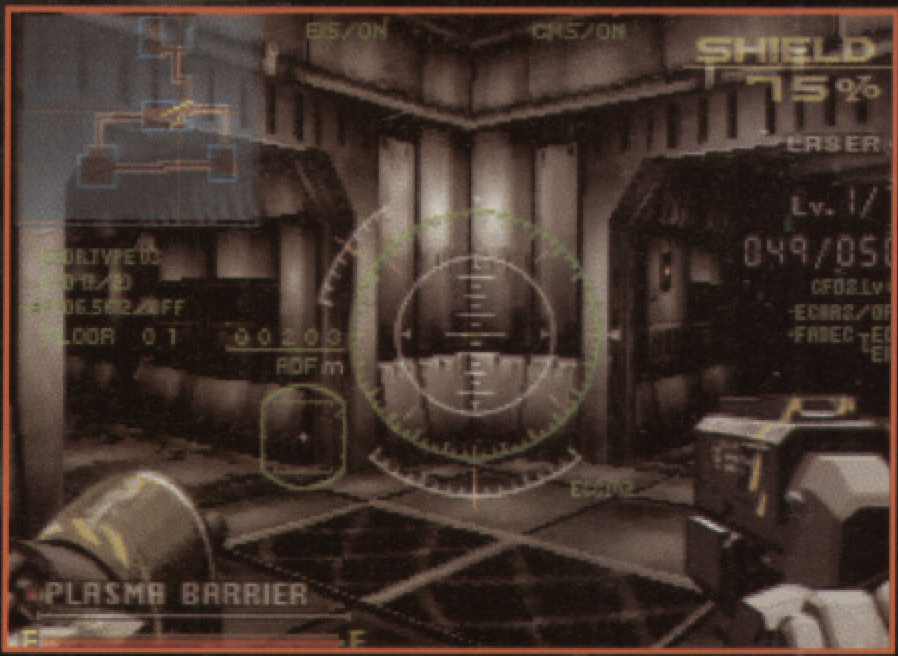
▲ Reactor overload. Nnnngh!

VD-YOU

Each floor has a single terminal, just like a bank autoteller. Here you can download a map of the entire level, easily allowing you to locate the exit. On some levels, you need to access the terminal to turn on the emergency lighting.





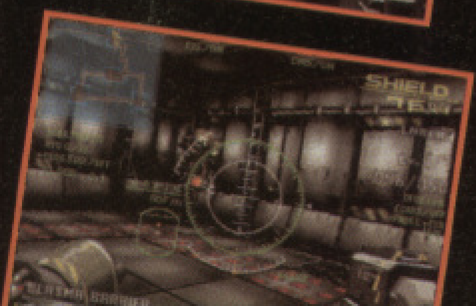


▲ *Deadalus was modelled on late c20th tube stattions. Welcome to Mornington Crescent zone.*

▼ *Incoming fire from some stiff resistors.*









THE GENERATOR GAME

The LAOCORN has an onboard generator in addition to its offensive equipment. The various uses of the generator are limited by a finite power supply, but this is occasionally replenishable:

HOVER JET

Lifts the LAOCORN off the ground, to enable rapid propulsion. Medium energy use.

PLASMA BARRIER

Brief forward energy shield against enemy fire. Low energy use.

POWER BOOSTER

Temporary increased weapon power. Low energy use.

BLAZE LASER

Wipes out all enemies in radar range. High energy use.

REFRESH

Transfers generator energy to shield.



GRAPHICS

88

▲Instantly impressive 3D scaling, creating the gloomy metallicy world of Deadalus. Nice display instrumentation.
-Gets repetitive.

SOUND

91

▲Wonderful music that adds atmosphere without intruding. Quite early Jarre/Vangelis. Backed up with superior sound effects.

PLAYABILITY

71

▲The smooth and speedy controls offer immediate gratification.
-The game's lack of depth is quickly apparent.

LASTABILITY

69

▲Very challenging, as the power-ups dry up and the levels become more complex.
▼Deadalus fails to maintain a sense of expectation and excitement beyond the early levels.

VFM

50

▲Hideously overpriced when Doom on the 32X is essentially a much better stab at the same thing.

OVERALL

70

A rather misconceived Doom clone that is big on atmospherics, but remote on gameplay. Only for the most avid space cadets.



1 PLAYERS

16 MEG

GAME TYPE
ADVENTURE

PRICE	TBA
BY	OCEAN
RELEASE	JUNE

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: REASONABLE
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD

1ST DAY SCORE

Defeat plant in Greenhouse

ORIGIN

Converted closely from a SNES original, based on the hit sequel movie of 1993.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM

Rescue baby Pubert from the mansion by exploring the vast grounds of the estate.





There is a saying that 'nanny knows best'. In the case of the Addams Family hired help, Debbie Jellinksy, knowing extends to babe-napping, extortion, and hi-jacking the Addams' vast estate. It all started when Morticia dropped. Out popped Pubert, a right little Addams with fully grown Moustache — a little replica of his father Gomez.

As Wednesday and Puggsley become prone to playing 'chicken' with the new arrival, Jellinksy is hired to look after the little bundle of misery. She quickly seduces Uncle Fester, marries him and seizes the Addams estate. The now dispossessed family are relying on Fester to find his way back into the mansion and give Jellinksy her marching orders. But the vast grounds around the mansion have been seeded with their 'pets' which makes it a hellish task.





GROUNDS FOR DIVORCE

Chez Addams is made up of nine different scenic areas viewed plan fashion and linked by all manner of tunnels, passages, even an underground rail, system! Progress through these in a northerly fashion leads to the mansion interior, and Jellinksy's fiercest cohorts.

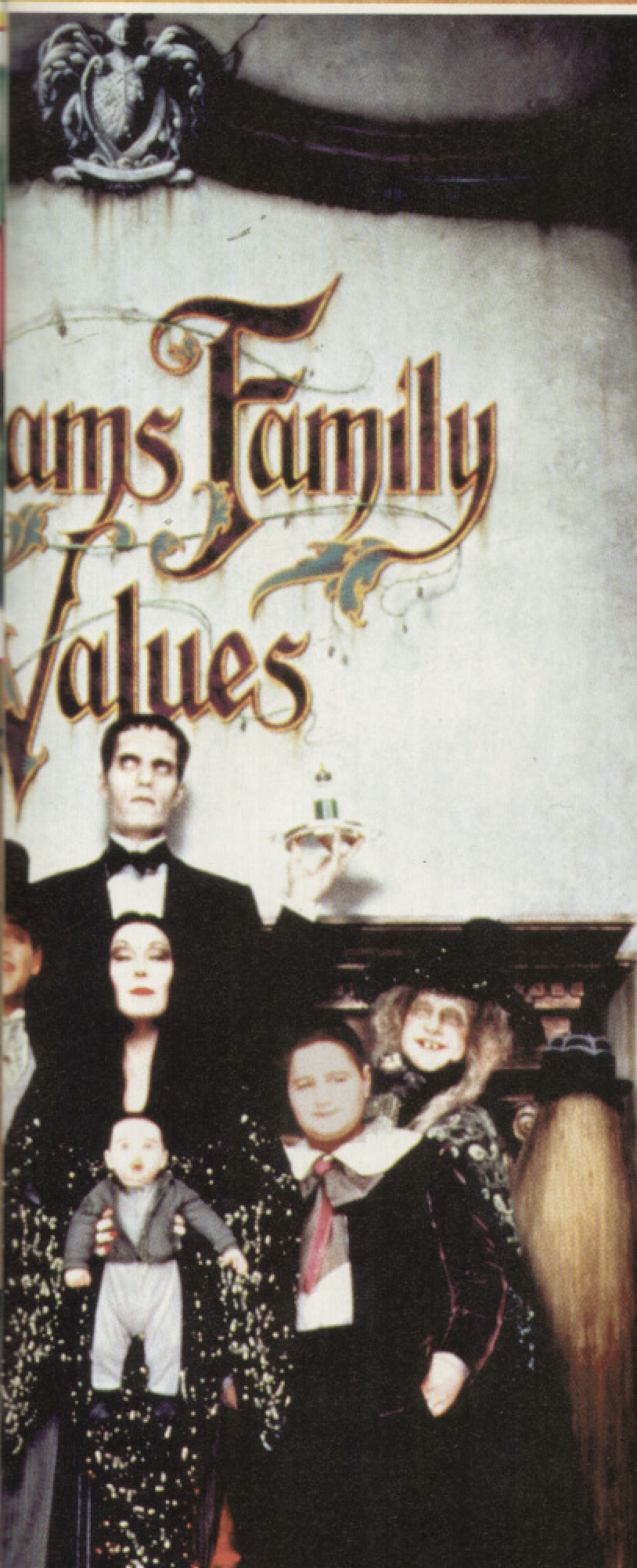




NUCLEAR FALLOUT FAMILY

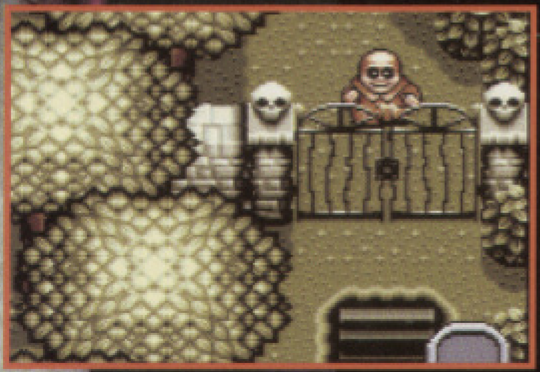
Consorting with your rellies is an essential part of the game. Sister in law Morticia is useful for clues, and also responds to some darkly romantic gifts. Gomez normally pops up to send you in the right direction, and frequent visits will be made to Granny for her unhealthy cookies. The kids know the grounds better than anyone else, if only you can find them.





PRESSING CHARGES

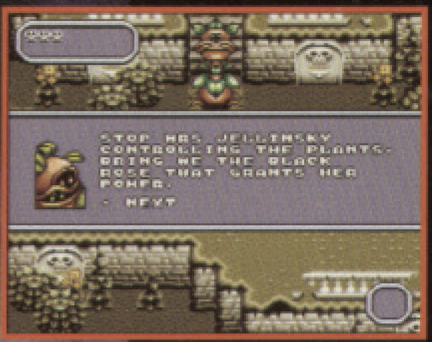
Fester relies on his feisty finger to deal with the warped wildlife found in each area. It contains an inexhaustible charge of zapping power, that repels or destroys. Unfortunately as Fester himself weakens, through enemy attacks, the range of the zapper decreases. There are other weapons to locate to supplement the zapper, like small rocks or plant seeds. Supplies of them must be replaced frequently.





▲ *Fester at the tradesmen's entrance.*







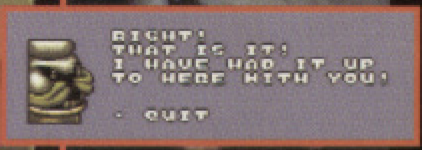
COMMENT



GUS

Addams Family Values is a welcome break from platform fodder — the game of the original film was a distinct non-event. However, it works better as an idea than a reality. At first it holds the promise of a Soleil style arcade adventure with lots of action, but the puzzle part consists of shuttling objects across a huge landscape. The game's lack of linearity is a weakness as well as a strength, as you are often left with no clue of where to go next. On the other hand, it has the merits of pretty graphics, nice plot twists and a fair level of challenge, plus it's a bit of a one-off as far as adventures go. If you fancy sitting down to a scalp-scratcher, Addams Family Values is worthy of serious consideration.





▲ *This caption writer sympathises with this point of view.*

FETCH AND CARRY

The basis for much of Addams Family Values is finding the right object to deal with the right problem. Characters in the game demand help, like the Phweep who begs you to find his voice. They in turn offer objects of their own. Being a twisted sort of environment, you should never take requests on face value, as giving things to the wrong sorts can land you deeper in the, er , mire.

MANIAC MANSION

You are now about to enter the Twilight Zone:



GARDENS
The nearest regions, which lead to most other areas. Where the family tends to hang out.





SWAMPS
Search out magic mushrooms, cousin It and the 'Feed Me' plants.





CAVERNS
Various complexes dot the landscape, usually holding important













GREENHOUSE
A hothouse of intrigue and onions and a nasty little pot plant.

GRAVEYARD
Various epitaphs of Ocean staff and other assorted lost souls.



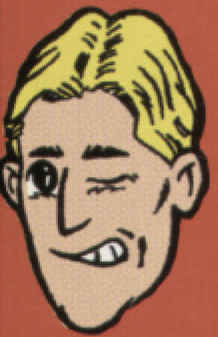






DESERT
Things get silly when you begin to meet dispepsic holes in the ground and voiceless Pwheeps.

COMMENT



PAUL

If you can just about recall the cinema release of AFV (By hypnotic regression into a past life) you'll know this game has the flimsiest links to the movie plot. Despite that, it's a highly-enjoyable twist on the adventure genre, and possesses quite a few original features. I'm not so sure about some of the large open plans levels, though, as they're usually sparsely populated and a bit of a chore to trudge through. The game really picks up though when you enter the maze-levels underground as the game takes shape. Plenty here to keep you amused for weeks.

GRAPHICS 79
▲Varying background graphics of a generally high standard.
▼Really bad sprite animation.

SOUND 80
▲Spooky music worthy of any Hammer horror.
▼Rather lacking in the FX department.

PLAYABILITY 72
▲Freedom to roam about, and a balance of puzzle and action gameplay.
▼-Too much time trekking back and forward to exchange items.

LASTABILITY 77
▲Tough on the brain and equally demanding on the reflexes. Addams should take a while to crack. There's also a firm objective to spur you on.

VFM 75
▲There's not much competition in the field.

OVERALL 74
One for people who like to fold their jim jams. Sometimes tedious, sometimes fun — a bit of a Curate's egg....but by no means a parson's nose.



1-4 PLAYERS

16 MEG

GAME TYPE
SPORTS SIM

PRICE £ 39.99

BY CODEMASTERS

RELEASE MAY

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: TOUGH

1ST DAY SCORE

Beat Zimbabwe.

ORIGIN

Fat blokes who are too unfit to play football lob a hard ball at other fat blokes who swing bats at it.

GAME BREAKDOWN

ORIGINALITY · REFLEXES · CHALLENGE · ACTION · STRATEGY

GAME AIM

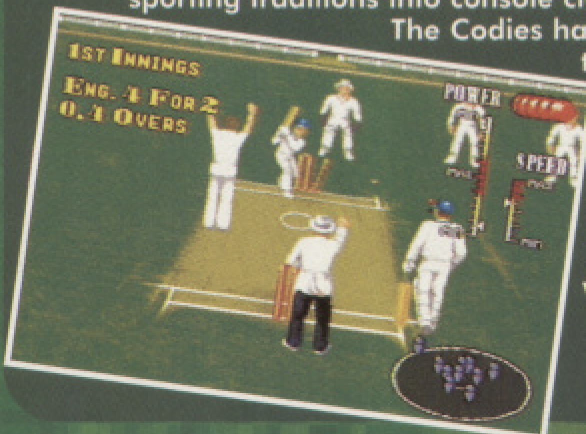
To try to retain national sporting pride in the face of defeat at the hands of every other cricketing nation in the world.

Brian Lara CRICK



WG Grace, Geoff Boycott, Imran Khan (isn't that who David Bowie married?), Ian Botham, and now Brian Lara. All knights of the noble sport of cricket. A sport that separates the men from the boys, the deep fielders from the silly mid offs, the darjeeling from cucumber sandwiches! A sport until now untouched by the hand of console programmers, is preparing to go global thanks to the team at Codemasters and their knack of transforming great British sporting traditions into console classics.

The Codies have taken this noble sport, stripped it down to the essential ingredients, and rebuilt the game in an effort to make it as playable as the real thing. With ten teams featuring international stars, and leagues that range from world class to village green Sunday slogging matches, will Brian Lara Cricket have the pace to bowl out the opposition or will it be rained off after lunch?



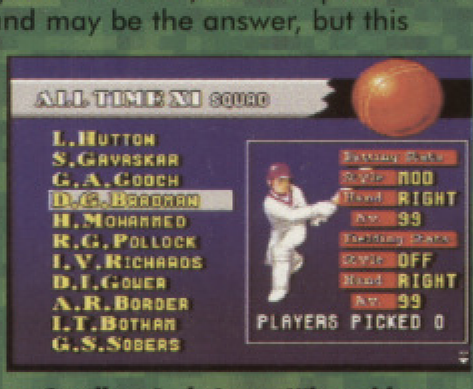
▼ *A quick greeting to Sega Power's loyal readership: Bonjour! Gutten Targ! Bonjourno! HEAR ME DEAN!*

TIME OUT

Hardly renowned for being the fastest of sports, cricket test matches can go on for days on end! To maintain the feeling of a real test series, but prevent the need to sit for days on end in front of the tellie, the programmers have included a virtual clock. The clock ticks away in the corner of the screen at an increased rate, and even demands a break for lunch and tea!

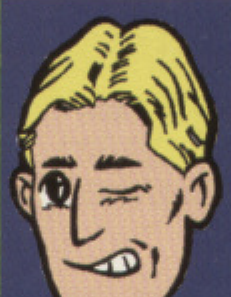
SPECTAT-ULAR

If you're weary of the crease, a short spell in the spectator's stand may be the answer, but this doesn't mean you have to neglect your nets practise. Instead you can pick two teams, sit back, and study tactical form.



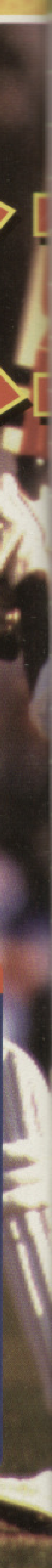
▲ *Goodbye Andy Lowe. Who said anything about rats and sinking ships?*

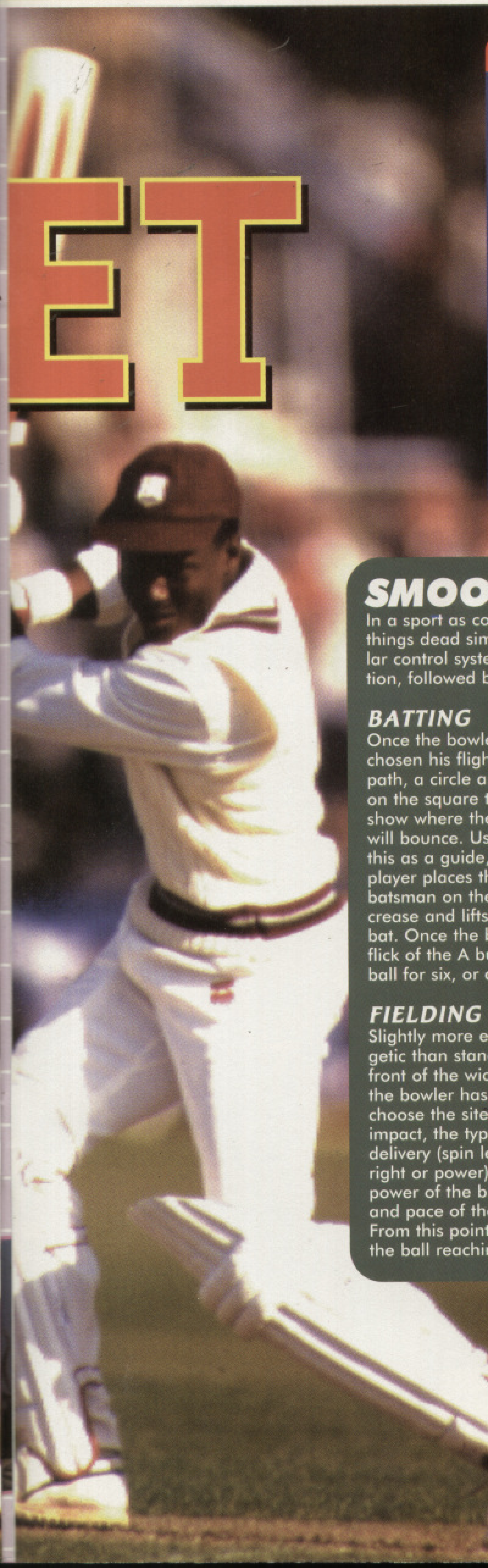
COMMENT



PAUL

Although there have been some attempts on the PC to bring cricket to the games arena, it's surprising to think nobody's had a go on the consoles. And thankfully the Codies have made a good job of converting the sport from a complex and time consuming affair to a very playable and addictive sports sim. The control method captures the feel of the game, but is simple enough for even the non-cricket player to pick up. And similarly the graphics possess the same practicality, allowing for both precision and timing. But I did feel the CPU had a slight edge over the human players when faced with split-second decisions, more often than not going in the CPU's favour. Apart from this minor quibble, Brian Lara's Cricket is an ace conversion of a classic sport to the Megadrive.





COMMENT

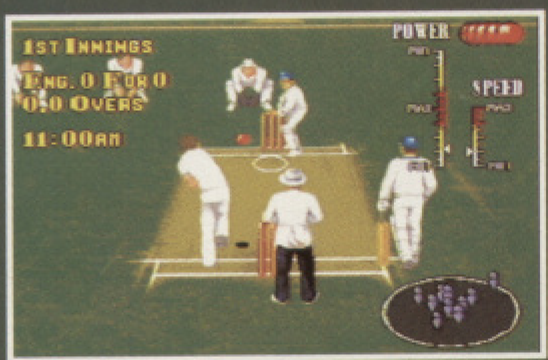


All the thrills of 'Beefy' Botham and othersuch Cricket legends are ported over to the Megadrive, with all the finesse Codemasters showed with their Sampras Tennis sim. Brian Lara Cricket manages to make a quite dull sport fun to play, with a beautifully simple but comprehensive control system allowing googlies and spins galore, whilst the elation at whacking a six is every bit as good as in the real thing. Graphically, it is of a similarly high standard (although some of the views are a little unfair on the bowler), and the cutaways to fielders lend a TV feel to the proceedings. Our Q&A pages often receive letters asking for a decent Cricket game, and the Codies have come up trumps with this absolute corker.

SMOOTH DELIVERY

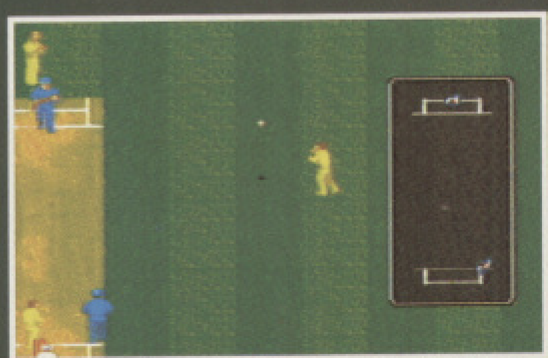
In a sport as complicated as cricket, is is essential to keep things dead simple. Batting and fielding are based on a similar control system — a tap of the A button to select the position, followed by a second tap to execute the movement.

BATTING



Once the bowler has chosen his flight path, a circle appears on the square to show where the ball will bounce. Using this as a guide, the player places the his batsman on the crease and lifts his bat. Once the bowler has released his delivery, sharp timing, a flick of the A button, and choice of direction should send the ball for six, or at least a single.

FIELDING



Slightly more energetic than standing in front of the wicket, the bowler has to choose the site of impact, the type of delivery (spin left/right or power), the power of the bowl, and pace of the run. From this point on, quick fielding is a must if you want to stop the ball reaching the boundary for a four.



GRAPHICS 84

▲Big player sprites which behave realistically, and a variety of camera angles.
▼The fielders are a bit on the weedy side.

SOUND 82

▲The expected test match intro music with a Caribbean theme.
▼Not a great deal of sound in-game apart from the occasional clap and quack.

PLAYABILITY 89

▲Extremely playable once you get into the finer points of bowling and batting.
▼The CPU AI is at times a bit too good, decisions rarely going in the player's favour.

LASTABILITY 88

▲Ten teams, different play options, unlimited options.
▼it's going to be quite a while before you walk away with the Ashes.

VFM 86

▲A sound purchase for sports sims fans who are looking for something a little bit out of the ordinary.

OVERALL 88

A refreshing change from the usual assortment of American sports sims. Simple, challenging, and addictive.

PUTT
SQUA

PUTTY SQUAD

1 PLAYERS	16 MEG

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

PRICE	£44.95
BY	OCEAN
RELEASE	APRIL

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOYPAD
CONTINUES: PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE
61,000

ORIGIN
Th e
s equel to
Sys t e
m 3's S upe r
Putty, b o th of

GAME BREAK-

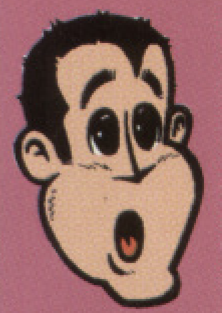


GAME AIM
Rescue the captive putties on each platform level by employing Putty's elastic abilities.

People can go on about their minority rights. Moaners the lot of them. Have they ever spared a thought for the blobs? Eh? Thought not.

Oh yes, they're happy for the blobs to provide them with entertainment. There's no complaint when people are watching Morph or Babapapa on Bravo. And no tears when the Playdoh 'Fuzzy Barber Shop' is brought out for the family. But when it comes to giving equal rights to blobs, bogies, clays and putties (and our other affiliated members) there's a squidgy kind of silence. Well, no more. We won't be treated like something to be scraped off the sole of a shoe — even if that's what we are. Along with the chewing gum legions, grout guerillas, come our fiercesome forces of liberation: tremble at the might of THE PUTTY SQUAD!

COMMENT



GUS

Luckily, Ocean have bypassed the boring Super Putty and gone straight for the sequel, and it's unquestionably their best to date. Putty Squad looks the business, with brilliant animation for both Putty and the game's legions of denizens. But it plays even better than it looks. The range of things you can do with the lump of clay makes for more playability than most left-right-jump platformers. The levels are large and offer freedom to explore and develop strategies, and things get tough very quickly. It's also a relief that the game humour works well, with silly disguises and putty's quizzical expressions. Only the sound is less than excellent, though accomplished enough. This is one of the most playable platformers around, made all the more attractive by its originality.

STARS IN THEIR EYES

The ubiqutous bonus star plays a part in Putty Squad, but it's of far more importance than a points bonus. As Putty's star tally increases, his offensive capabilities grow. Some stars are just lying around, but others may be earned in various ways — jumping on the guards rather than just punching them. Also, some enemies remove stars as well as energy. You lose all your stars and powers with each lost life, making later levels much more difficult, so there's an added incentive to stay alive.



▲ *Now there's something you don't see every day.*





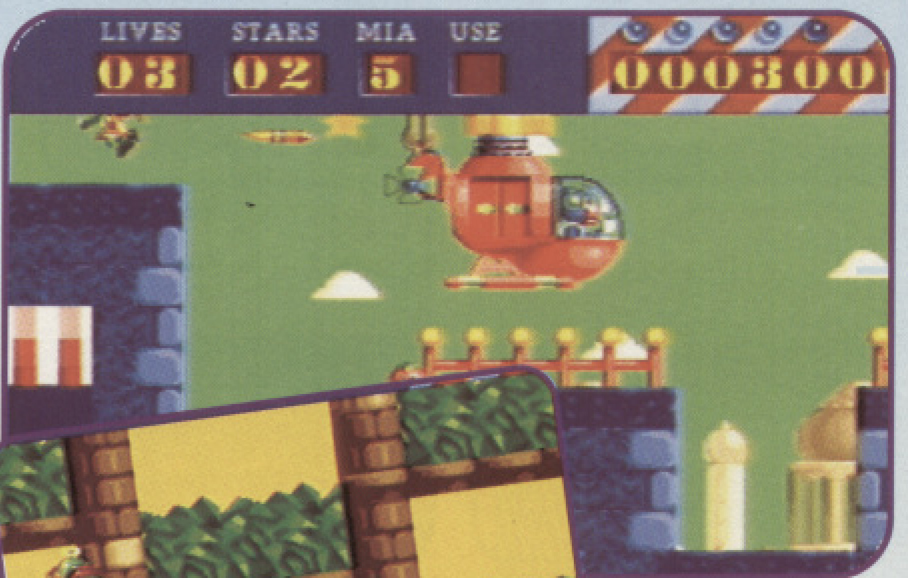


DWEEVIL'S WOBBLE...

Putty's relationship with Dweevil is rather bizarre. A sort of punk cat, he wanders the levels on his rocket-powered skateboard. Putty summons him by regurgitating the packet of cat food. When Dweevil arrives, he goes for Putty. If he get a kick in, he lays a time-bomb in celebration. If Putty floors him, his substantial belly serves as a trampoline. Putty can even push him into position.









▲ *Imagine an island where the natives only speak Sega Power lingo because of copies that found themselves there. The Pish Tribe, maybe?*

0-9 **STARS**
PUTTY PUNCH



10-29 **STARS**
POWER PUNCH



30-49 **STARS**
PUTTY DARTS

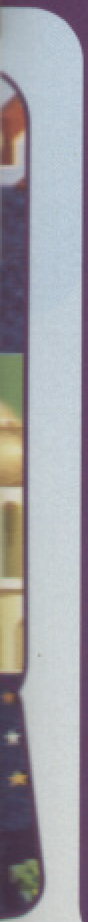


50-69 **STARS**
PUTTY POKE



70- **STARS**
PUTTY BOMB





GROUTA BOUT

Putty demonstrates his elastic properties in several useful ways. He uses these shape-changing powers to overcome the trials of landscape and enemy:

SHUFFLE

For extra speed and moving across gaps, Putty stretches himself lengthways.



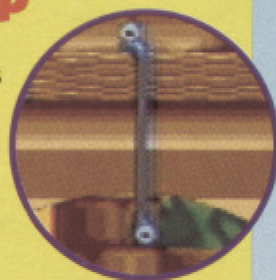
STRETCH

This allows Putty to pull himself up to higher platforms or grab bonuses without jumping.



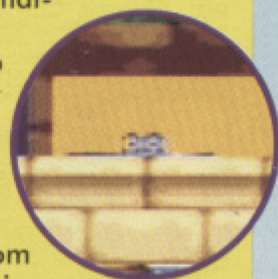
DROOP

Lets Putty descend as long as there is a floor beneath him.



ABSORB

With Putty flattened, he can absorb all manner of items. It's also doubles as a safety position from most enemies.



INFLATE

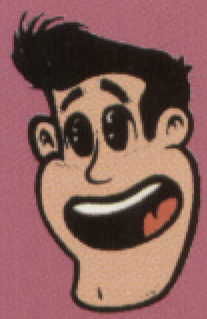
After jumping, Putty is able to pump himself and float upwards. The bigger he becomes, the faster he rises. But inflating reduces his energy progressively.





▲ Can you spot Putty in this screen-shot? Clue: he's at the bottom.

COMMENT

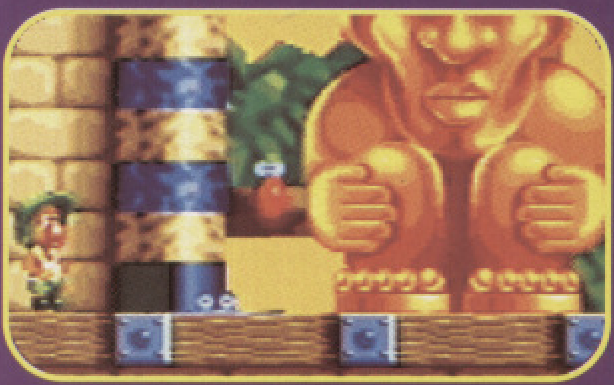


STEVE

Congrats go to Ocean for what is one of the most original platformers for ages. After the superb Jelly Boy, they return to their morphing fixation with Putty Squad which, whilst not as immediately playable as JB, offers a more challenging task. Guiding the little blue blob up and onwards requires real skill, but pulling off his special moves soon becomes second nature. Everything about the game feels right. The cartoon graphics are ideally suited, and each level features a fiendish array of ledges to traverse. Add to this a wealth of hyper-intelligent baddies, and you have a game worthy of anyone's attention. It's just a pity the music is so crap, but I'm sure we can forgive it that little faux-pas.

TIE A YELLOW RIBBON

The purpose of Putty's mission is to rescue his compatriots, languishing within enemy territory. Each red putty is absorbed into him before locating the hidden exit. Some stages have hidden bonus areas. Doors appear out of walls and absorbing the green cheese takes you to other areas.





▲ Glenda the singing Conga and her perforated ear drum (not shown).

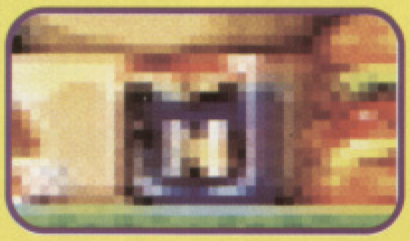
JUNK FOOD

Putty busts his way into a series of crates found in each landscape. He is able to absorb the contents which spew forth. Some of these items have an instant beneficial effect on his health, whereas other items add uncanny powers to his arsenal, like the following:



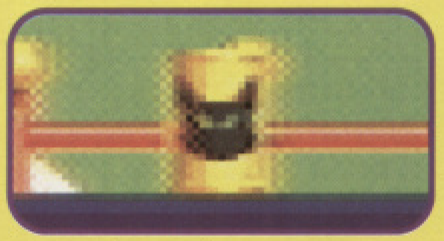
POD

Putty takes to the skies in a mini-rocket. If he has nitros he can bomb from the air. Flying reduces health, but at least he can't crash.



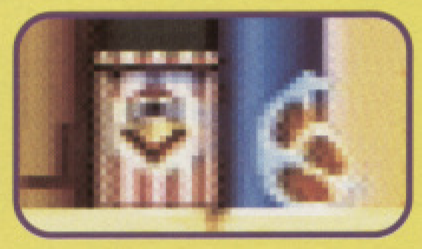
NITRO

Once absorbed, Putty can lay time bombs when flat.



CAT FOOD

Used to call Dweevil.



FOOD

Replaces lost health.



DISGUISE

With a convincing specs-and-moustache set, he fools the enemies and walks by unmolested.



CHILLI

No one can result Putty's Jalapeno-induced rage.



QUAVER

Summons the DJ, whose turn starts the baddies raving helpessly.

GRAPHICS 92

▲Backdrops are crisper than a bag of Walkers and the animation is fluid. Great enemy sprites and lots going on at any one time.

SOUND 81

▲Hear putty squeak.
▼The beatbox backing tracks sound a little dated.

PLAYABILITY 91

▲The initial challenge is to work out how to get to grips with Putty. The baddies are intelligent and the levels are well thought out.

LASTABILITY 89

▲Loads of levels, some of which are extremely tough, despite the password system. You'll need to fine-tune your putty control.

VFM 88

▲A platformer of this quality is a rare thing indeed, so you can't grumble at the tariff.

OVERALL 90

Putty Squad comes together as one of the most solid and challenging platformers of the year, and a high point for Ocean.



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1-4 PLAYERS

24 MEG

GAME TYPE
SPORT

PRICE £44.99

BY ACCLAIM

RELEASE JUNE

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOYPAD
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD

1ST DAY SCORE
49rs-Redskins: 20-15

ORIGIN
Based on the popular American sport they call football. Not to be mistaken for our own real football. Which they call soccer.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
To acquire the highest score by beating an opposing team in a game of American Football.

The NFL Quarterback Club. Now there's a name that commands respect wherever it is heard, for the Quarterback Club is undoubtedly one of the most prestigious organisations in the World. Meeting every Tuesday and Thursday at the official club treehouse, its exclusive members are only granted entry to the hallowed inner sanctum upon presentation of the top secret club password and handshake. Once within, they proceed with the usual club agenda – high-stake games of Top Trumps, shotgunning cans of Top Deck and chomping on Barrett's sweet cigarettes, before Mrs McSwithen arrives with a lunchtime treat of chicken sandwiches and lemon squash. The second half of the day is then spent plotting how best to pelt eggs at the two smelly unpopular kids at Quarterback High, Joey Montana and Jonathan Madden. Boy, it sure is a great club and we were privileged enough to join in their members-only antics thanks to the NFL Quarterback Club game released on the Megadrive a couple of months back. Well, now its time for a club reunion, only this Tuesday's meeting promises to be even more exciting, because it takes place in the more luxurious 32X treehouse. Coo.

COMMENT



TOM

I liked Quarterback Club on the Megadrive, so the least I expected from the 32X version was a game that played just as well. I wasn't however, expecting Acclaim to improve the visuals that much. As such, the result comes as quite a pleasant surprise. Whereas the graphics on Megadrive Quarterback Club were clear and practical, there's no doubt that they were pretty basic. 32X Quarterback Club, on the other hand, looks extremely detailed with impressive pitch textures and clearly-defined sprites, plus the extra views all add to the superb presentation. Likewise, the sound is superior, most noticeably with the clearer speech. The lack of the Quarterback Challenge is a bit of a shame, since it was quite fun. However, even without it, this is still the better game. If you have a 32X and no Madden-style game to speak of, this should be a definite consideration.









32X EH? SO WHAT'S NEW?

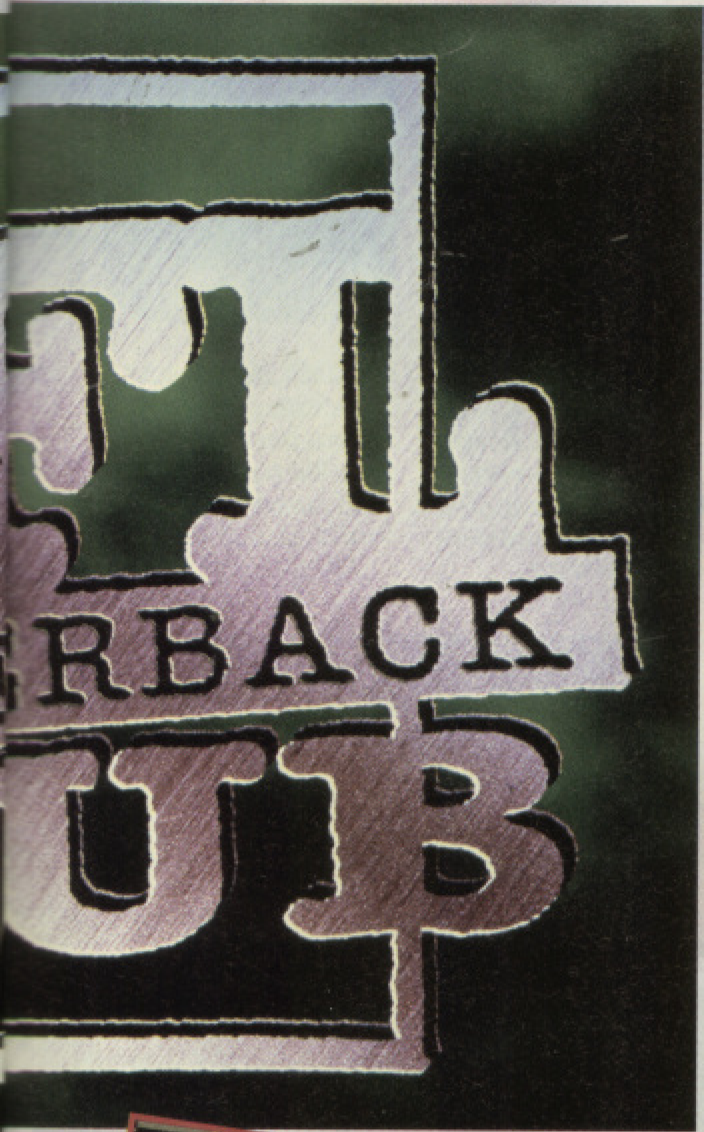
The least you'd expect from a Megadrive 32X version of 16-bit game is better graphics and sound. That's what all that extra technology is for, after all. Well as it happens, that's exactly what the 32X version of Quarterback Club is all about. The actual gameplay is identical to the Megadrive version. The 32X's enhanced resolution and improved colour palette have all been put to use, with extremely impressive results. The front-end presentation is more polished, the playing field looks more convincing, with a better grass texture and even a stadium crowd around the edges. What's more 32X Quaterback Club even has all-new, biologically improved viewpoints to play from and here they are in their fullness.

NORMAL CAM

The standard Madden-style view, the Normal Cam gives you a good overall view of the pitch, whilst still keeping plenty of the graphical detail on screen.

BLIMP CAM

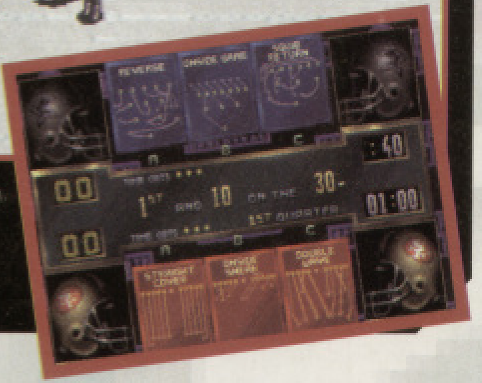
This view realistically simulates how the game would be seen through the eyes of an overweight spectator. Ha ha, no really, it's actually a distance view of the pitch as seen from aeriel camera.



AM I MISSING SOMETHING?

Avid readers of our NFL Quarterback Club reviews might notice that something is amiss. Well, the 32X version doesn't have the Quarterback Challenge, a mode that allowed you to take part in Quarterback training. Mind you, since this didn't actually help you in the game proper, it's not really a great loss to quarterback kind.





▲ *Games action ahoy in this action packed screen shot*



SHOULDER CAM

Not actually carried around on the shoulder of an annoyed player, this one. In fact, it actually views the game from shoulder height, providing some fairly impressive usage of the 32X's sprite scaling abilities as the players move in and out of the foreground.

AUTO CAM

If you fancy a variety of viewpoints without the messy task of manually switching between them, this is the one for you. When long-distant kicks are in operation, it provides you with a Blimp Cam view, whereas more standard running moves are seen from the Normal View. What's more, passing moves are seen from their own unique panning upward view.



COMMENT



GUS

Looks better, sounds better — 32X Quarterback Club is an improved version of a perfectly competent Megadrive simulation. The added viewpoints make the game more exciting and like real TV gridiron (though the replay mode is still flawed, as the action freezes when you pan). But the penalty is the loss of the Quarterback Challenge, which, though an add-on to the main game in the original, was a major contributor to its appeal. What's left is the no-frills playoffs, well plenty of frills actually. If you have gone to the trouble to get a 32X, I can thoroughly recommend this over all other American Football games.

GRAPHICS — 87

▲A vast improvement over the Megadrive, with better pitch textures and player animation.
▼As far as the 32X goes, this isn't the amazing next level.

SOUND — 82

▲A fair selection of good sound-effects and some decent speech too.
▼Boring, chugging front-end music. Needs more sound-effects too.

PLAYABILITY — 87

▲Responsive, easy-to-use, Madden-esque controls.
▼If American Football isn't your cup of tea, you won't like it.

LASTABILITY — 86

▲With the range of play modes, including Pro-Bowl and multi-player options, there's loads to keep you at it.
▼They took out the Quarterback Challenge.

VFM — 83

▲Definitely superior to the Megadrive version and all for the same price.
▼Providing you already have a 32X, that is.

OVERALL — 87

Nothing to speak of 32-bit wise, but quite simply a great American Football game. Perhaps the best .



1 PLAYERS | **4 MEG**

GAME TYPE: PLATFORM

PRICE: £29.99

BY: US GOLD

RELEASE: JUNE

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOYPAD
CONTINUES: UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS: ONE
RESPONSIVENESS: FINE
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD

1ST DAY SCORE
Complete Star Man

ORIGIN
Having appeared everywhere else, Mega Man hits the Game Gear courtesy of US Gold.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Having done his time on the Megadrive, Capcom's NES hero is here to save the day for Game Gear owners.

MEGA

If, at six years-old, Sonic is at what Sega consider retirement age, spare a thought for poor old MegaMan. Now entering his tenth year of active service, MegaMan has been hobbling across platforms and exploring flick-screen locations in his never-ending quest for retirement.

Now his aching bones have been ported to the Game Gear as US Gold snatch away his pension book and milk tokens and force him into battle with four baddies resurrected from the existing NES games. In fact, this sets the theme for the rest of the game, as US G claim Game Gear Megaman lifts all the best aspects of the original games, and weeds out the crappy bits. If only they'd done the same to Hurricanes. Mind you, there'd be stuff all left after all that pruning...

WILEY DELIGHTED

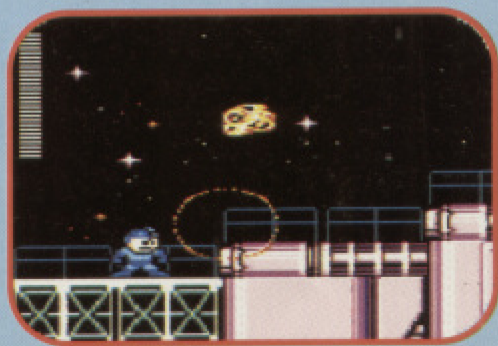
As with every Megaman game to date, Doctor Wiley is the guy responsible for our hero's latest outing. As with every MM game to date, Wiley has recruited all manner of weird cohorts to aid him finishing Megaman off. Why he jusy couldn't have him shot we don't know, but here are the evil guys MM encounters:

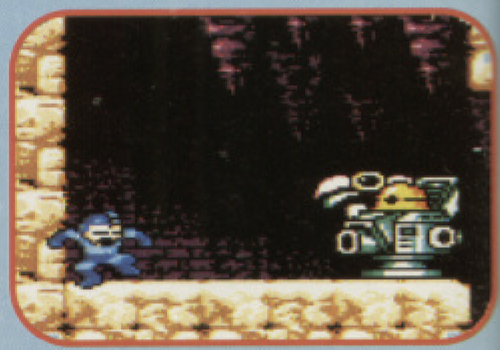


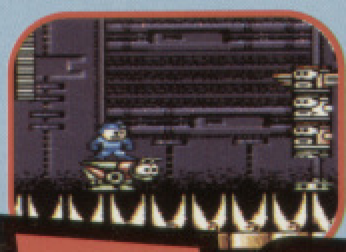
STONE MAN: Pretty normal MM fare, with all the usual air and ground-based villains whizzing around this quarry-based location.

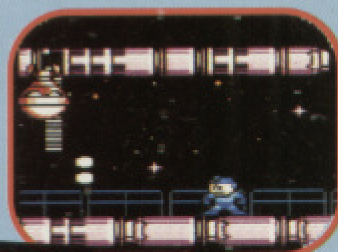


BRIGHT MAN: Hahahah a play on words, because... get this, the level's dark until a certain creature is shot. Titter.











R. COIL-Y

Resplendent in his metal trouser suit, Megaman is an athletic chap. Armed with a suit-mounted cannon, he runs, slides and jumps across the play area picking off baddies. When the boss creature has been defeated MM inherits one of their skills. Simlarly, pausing the game reveals a secondary character — a dog called R. Coil, who, when summoned, helps Megaman jump higher than normal.





▲ *Megaman contemplates Anusol prescriptions for some time to come.*





STAR MAN: An early incarnation of David Bowie, and the inhabitant of a sprawling space station. Rockets and meteors pose a problem here.



NAPALM MAN: The hardest level of the game. Full of bloody annoying tigers and jungle warfare things. Sods.

COMMENT



STEVE

By rights, any handheld should be the perfect medium for Megaman. After all, the original was at its best on the Game Boy, so by rights an update which draws the best from the existing versions and is in colour, should be the ultimate handheld platformer. Wrong. Because, as with every version of Megaman to date, this Game Gear incarnation is let down by some very basic flaws. Whilst the basic platform/shoot 'em up mix is as playable as ever, the needless loss of life and frustrating sections of the original have also survived the transition. This makes for a game which can be either a complete walk-over or wildly frustrating, and these two factors make for an uneven game. Megaman is certainly packed with levels, bosses and power-ups, but sadly only the most tolerant will benefit.



COMMENT

GUS

This is the second quality platformer in as many months from US Gold, and Megaman is a notch up from what Game Gear owners have come to expect. It's a close conversion of the Megaman style, with graphics on par with the recent Megadrive Megaworld. However, it's frustrating nature won't endear it to every player, in the way we think Operation Starfish will. If you're a Megaman fan, this is handheld heaven. Otherwise, this is an ideal buy for those who like a real Game Gear toughie.

GRAPHICS — 84

▲Well-drawn sprites, the backdrops are detailed and varied, and there are loads of enemy sprites to butcher.

SOUND — 43

▼A bit puny to say the least. The effects have less impact than a fight between John Inman and Julian Clary.

PLAYABILITY — 78

▲The simplistic nature means you'll be blasting with the best before long...
▼Only to have to do it again thanks to the frequently frustrating and unavoidable attack waves.

LASTABILITY — 76

▲The alien attacks follow a set pattern so it'll take ages to learn them.
▼It depends if you treasure your hair as to whether you'll persevere.

VFM — 74

▲Not overly expensive.
▼But not exactly the cream of the Game Gear crop.

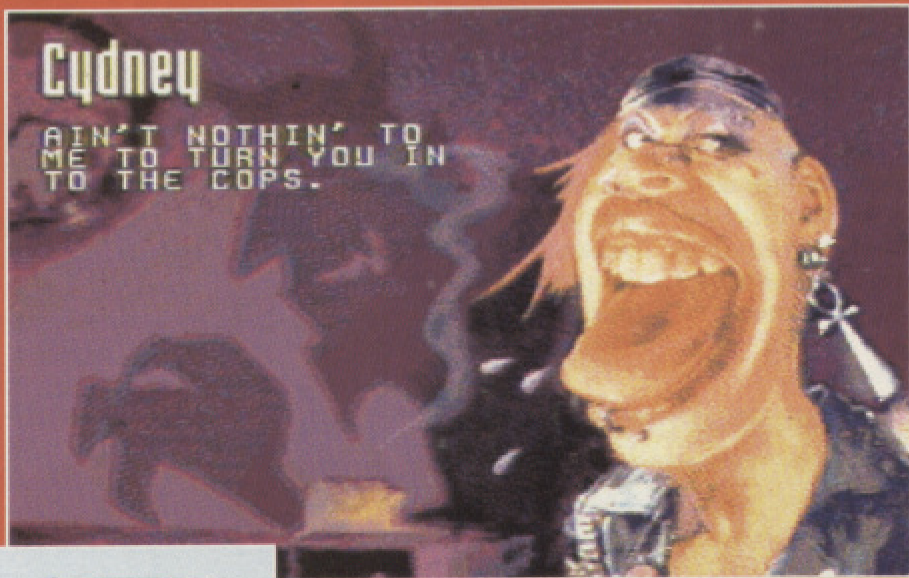
OVERALL — 75

A very good conversion drawing all the best aspects of the series, but the flaws of the original are also present. What a pity.

1-2 PLAYERS	
PRICE	TBA
BY	EA
RELEASE	MAY
GAME TYPE	RACING

ROAD RASH CD





What goes around comes around, and around and around. Well it does if you buy EA games. Road Rash has been thrashing around Megadrive country roads and lanes for the best part of four years now, and EA show no sign of slowing down. Not long after the release of the third Megadrive edition comes a portmanteau of the cartridge games bundled with the front-end of the groovy 3DO game, with all the rendered footage and video clips.



PANZER PEOPLE

The CD contains characters and options from the excellent 3DO game. These are set in 'Der Panzer Club'. a biker's dive. Select a cartoony character and browse the bikes which are profiled in arresting camera sweeps. All race starts, finishes and busts are accompanied with a series of funny video clips. Well, funny the first time.

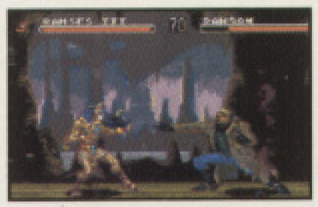


1 PLAYERS	
PRICE	£49.99
BY	SEGA
RELEASE	MAY
GAME TYPE	BEAT EM UP

ETERNAL CHAMPIONS CD

MURDER MOST HORRID

Eternal Champions earnestly appeals to sicko mentalities with its range of deaths. Merely dispatching an opponent in regular beat 'em up fashion is only the simplest way to end a round. There are multiple other death modes; where the background can come to life (see the example of the cinema attendant pulling out a shotgun); finishing moves, or even spectacular 'cinekills' shown in rendered cut-sequences created on Silicon Graphics machines.



Eternal Champions on cart was of little note, apart from the Great Mean Machines Review Scandal. Picture it, Christmas 1993. At that time Rad was doing some stuff on MEAN MACHINES while working on the new Sega Mag. He did the review honours on Eternal Champions, and, perhaps having too much sherry trifle, awarded it a massive 98%. Okay, the game was solid enough, but in retrospect it was an undeniable boob. Well, confessions like that are rare, but the arrival of Eternal Champions CD is a timely opportunity to come clean. And it also explains why this, a superior game, scores less than its cart original. Sega have spent considerable time, money and effort putting together a beat 'em up that will hopefully enhance the Mega-CD, and set-up the characters for further next generation editions.

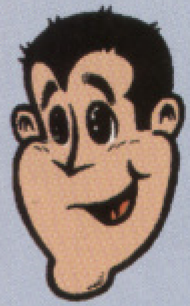


SKIDDY-WISE

The playing perspective is almost identical to previous Road Rash titles, like McCartney/Lennon's 'long and winding road'. However, new hazards and targets make their debut. The 'zombie' inhabitants of the town stage, supermarket trolleys and hazards unique to each stage present challenges.



COMMENT



GUS

Road Rash has clearly had its day, and this CD version was the last 16bit edition to have been something new and exciting. It isn't. Although the worthy presentation of the 3D0 has found a place on the CD, none of the new graphics and gameplay have. You could be looking at previious Road Rash. You are also looking at a good £40 for a basically three year-old game. Good value for EA, but not so good for Mega-CD owners.

COMMENT



STEVE

Megadrive owners owe a debt to Road Rash and EA — it was the best racer on the machine for many moons. But times move on, and that debt has been repaid. The Mega-CD version was the opportunity to try something new using the machine's limited hardware. The opportunity has been largely missed, as the additions are fripperies and the main game unchanged. Make your buying decision in light of this — just say no.

GRAPHICS 75
The presentational graphics are ace, but the racing scenes look very dated.

SOUND 78
Rawk which might go down well in the mid-west but not in this nation of Dance.

PLAYABILITY 79
Still a good reflex tester/ fun game, but doesn't look serious next to Virtua Racing/ Kawasaki

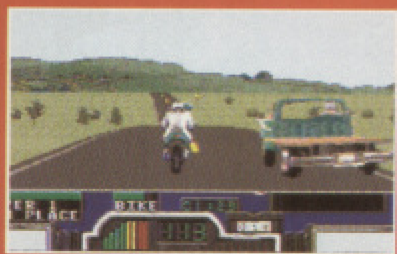
LASTABILITY 69
The feeling of Deja vu ruins lasting appeal.

VFM 72
EA are overcharging, in our opinion for a game they've already oversold.

OVERALL 74
Nothing much to add to either Road Rash 2 or 3, though not strictly a bad game.















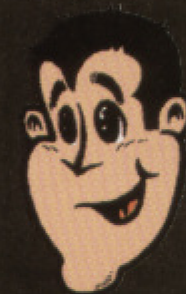
COMMENT



STEVE

For once we have a Mega-CD conversion that actually adds a lot to the original. Whether you really want all the cinekills and FMV footage is another matter. It's a pity that so many of the best features are almost impossible to locate through play, and players will have to wait for Sega to reveal the hundreds of moves. That said, the appeal of Eternal CD is clear for any fans of the one-on-one beat 'em up genre.

COMMENT



GUS

Despite the strenuous efforts of Sega, this still fails to have the panache of Streetfighter or MK2. Mortal Kombat 2 especially moved the genre on in a way that makes Eternal Champions look dated. But the game plays quite well, if a little sluggishly, and there's tons of features crammed in. It's probably the best Mega-CD game of the year to date.

THE DIRTY DOUBLE DOZEN

Eternal CD has a staggering 24 characters to play with. 16 of these are selectable from the options screen — four more than Eternal on cart. The other eight are bizarre editions, including a chicken. They all have their own moves, including specials.



GRAPHICS 85
Rendered intro and sequences and competent in-game graphics

SOUND 79
FX are good, but the rock should have been hard hitting techno.

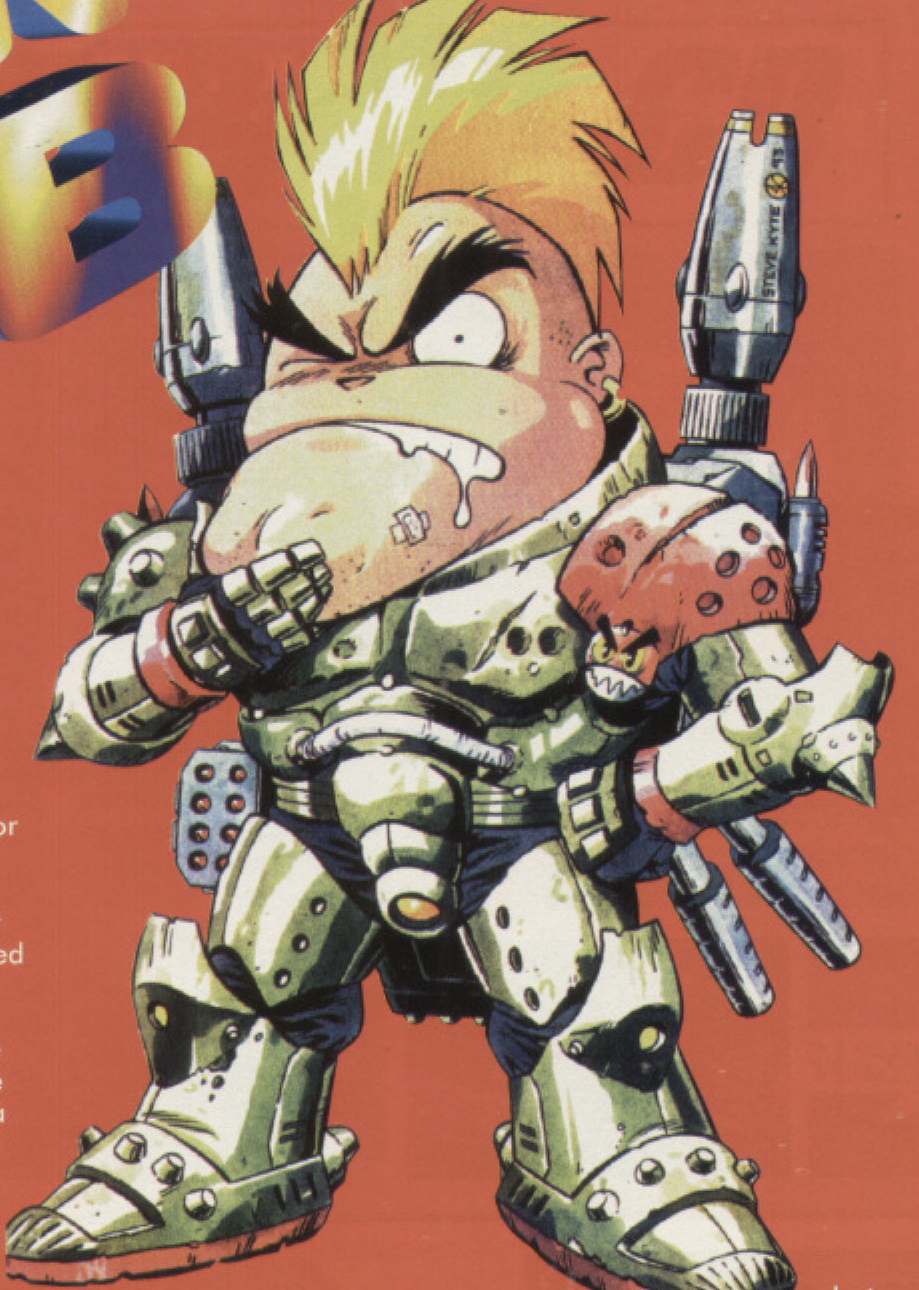
PLAYABILITY 87
A game that rewards some serious playing, but it's not as sassy as MK2.

LASTABILITY 89
Unquestionably the game's top feature is its plethora of hidden features.

VFM 88
A lot of extra development, but the core game is beginning to look dated.

OVERALL 87
At the top end of the beat 'em up scale, but not quite on the podium.

MEAN YOB



I'm answering letters in front of the TV this month, as this new show 'Fists Of Fun' is about to come on. Who's hosting it, Julian Clary? Anyway, TV seems light relief after going through some of your dung. I'd rather go down the aisle with Mandy Jordache and go dating with Beth than answer some of the crap you pass off as letters. Nevertheless there are a couple lucid and clean enough to publish here. If you think you can do better (I don't see how it can get much worse) then stick it down onto paper, wipe a bogey on it and send it to: MR WOPSY'S GOT A DOO-DAH MAIL-BAG, MEAN MACHINES SEGA, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

CLEBBING

Dear Yob,
Right at the beginning it seemed Sega had sealed the fate of the Mega-CD. Afterburner was total crap and then it seemed that the only games Sega produced for the system were ones where you chose the direction and watched a piece of FMV. That trend continues with the added advantage of being able to choot things — WOW!
If it wasn't for companies like Core and Digital Pictures, the Mega-CD would have been a total disaster. I really thought there would be a turnaround when Thunderhawk was released. There was to an extent, with titles like Double Switch and Ground Zero Texas.
Anyway. have you ever thought of doing features on indiviudal companies or having more in-depth interviews with programmers, graphic artists, etc. Or what about segments of news from the US or Japan like Jaz was doing. And as someone said, what about a spine for the magazine as at the moment it tears easily?
Simon Clark, Hong Kong

YOB:Okay, so even Sega would have to admit the Mega-CD has been less than a roaring success. Part of the problem was that not enough of you buggers bought them! If there had been a million hungry Mega-CD owners out there, then companies would have been happier about putting together games. Most titles just don't sell enough to make it worth their while. But there are some really neat titles for the machine: Snatcher, BC Racers and Sonic CD being just a selection. So stop moaning.



▲ *S'funny, but I thought Dumbo was an elephant.*

MINKING

Dear Yob,
In my opinion Sega have messed up big. They promised arcade-perfect versions of Virtua Racing and Virtua Star Wars on their much-hyped 32X. They had the chance to release a machine with enough beef to blow the competition completely out of the water but what they've created is something else for SNES owners to laugh at. It was receiving bad press even before it was in the shops. Are there any excuses other than a lack of hardware capabilities that can explain the massive border around the play area in Doom? The clamp-like hands on the steering wheel in Virtua Racing Deluxe?
I had so much hope for the 32X that I created a cartoon character around it. I'm sticking to the normal Megadrive until all of the new consoles come out, then buying the most powerful one of the lot. I'm not quite sure which one it will be, but I know the man who has the last laugh will not be a Sega owner. And the answer to why the Saturn has a cartridge port? Well you've got to have somewhere to stick your 64X!
Captain Jupiter, Asteroid Crashsite

YOB:Since when were you promoted from Space Cadet to Captain? Do you really think that SNES owners are laughing at Virtua Racing Deluxe, when they have



▲ *Doh! We can't find the name of the guy who did this smart cartoon. But he's all right by us.*

Stunt Race FX? Since when did a SNES owner get to play Doom? Perhaps you think Vortex is superior to Metal Head. No, Never and No are the answers, I think you'll find. Bear some facts in mind, faeces brain: the first games were only in development a short time; teams like Scavenger and Core are doing some amazing 32X development and we've Virtua Fighter amongst others to look forward to. The 32X might not be the Saturn, but its technology gives the SNES a bloody good hiding.

MOCKIT

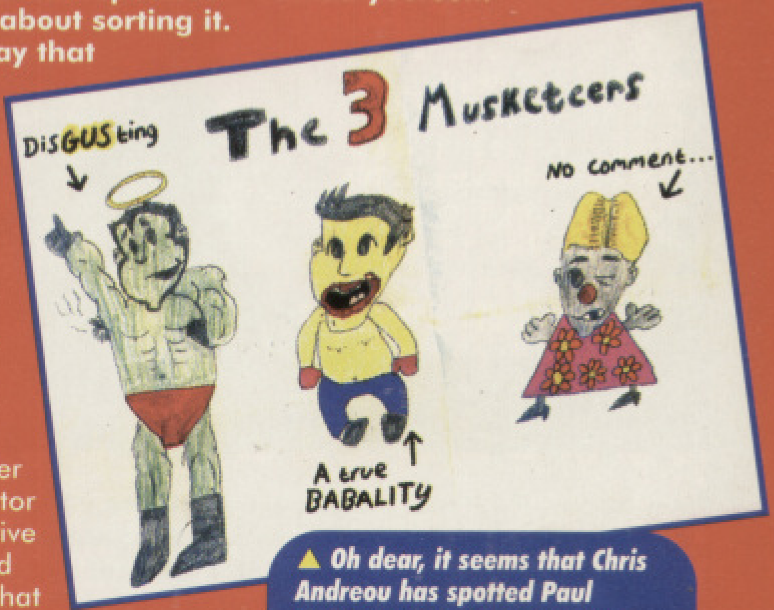
Dear Yob
I have something to say — I am the captain of world 3 sector 9 area 203. I think your face looks like a poor defensless [sic] after being cacked on by a dinosaur. Wonder what happened to Steve? Yes he's MENTLE [sic]. Thanks to me that is. I put 24 tablets into his turd and lemon sandwich these tablets are mentle makers.
If you don't give me 30 billion pounds, three contries [sic], 201 Megadrive games and a signed photo of you (to play darts with) if not I'll come round to your place and rip your ugly head off. Watch it.
Drag
YOB:You're 'wonderful': You may wonder what all the little [sic]s mean (though it's probably how you would write that you were feeling ill). They are added by us to let the readers know that is how the letter was actually written, in case they thought we were the spuds who couldn't spell elementary words — you know, basic staples of the English language, such as mental. They may also wonder why we printed such a complete arse-wipe of a contribution to this great magazine. Basically to show what a complete failure of the education system you are. We assume you're some eight-year old spotty scrote with no mates, but the sad fact is you are probably an 18 year-old trolley catcher at Sainsbury's who loses his mess over Blaze from SOR.

BOGGING

Dear Yob
I got a 32X at Christmas and I wonder if anyone else has the same problem as I have. My one game is VR Deluxe, which keeps crashing halfway through each race. I have also noticed that since I got the 32X, Ground Zero Texas crashes occasionally as well. I don't know if this is a coincidence or if the 32X is faulty. Could it be that the first batch of machines is faulty, or just mine? I haven't tried it with any other games, but with these two it's bad enough, as they are the only ones I'm playing at the moment. I was going to get Doom, but it may well have the same problem. Can you find out from Sega exactly what is going on?
Chris Rayment, Hemel Hempstead
YOB:The problem might come from using an old Megadrive. There are incompatibility problems between very old models and the first batch of 32Xs. Best speak to Sega, matey about sorting it. There's no way that your 32X can affect your Ground Zero Texas though. Try giving the disc a wipe.

MANKY

Dear Yob
In October I bought a Master System Convertor for my Megadrive because I wised up to the fact that there are some excellent cheap 8-bit games out there, and in a few years it will be near enough impossible to get them. So I want to build up a collection before they vanish forever.
My problem is that some of them are nigh-on-impossible to find; titles like Fantasy Zone series, Spy v Spy, Wonderboy 1,2,3, Hang On, Choplifter etc. Even some of the newer titles like Time Soldiers and Super Monaco GP. I'm even finding difficulty with some Megadrive classics like Pacmania and Rambo 3, Flicky and Ghostbusters are almost impossible to get.
I tried to contact Sega about some of their earlier Master System titles but was actually told to 'try a second-hand shop'. Now we have all the 'next generation' systems on the horizon and some of our all-time classic games will be reduced to fond memories and screenshots in old computer magazines.
I'm looking forward to the Saturn and Playstation, but it doesn't matter what format a game is on as long as it is a good game. If there was a way to get companies to release their back catalogue games on an upgraded format they should shift a few units. Look at Megagames 2, 3 and the more recent Pitfall.
Mark Hogg, Derby
YOB:Most Master System games are disappearing fast (thank God!), and the ones still on sale in the big shops are well over-priced. You are right that there are some good games worth seeking out — New Zealand Story is one excellent example. Try sifting through our Megamart column or put in an ad yourself.



▲ *Oh dear, it seems that Chris Andreou has spotted Paul Bufton's alter-ego: Bra-Man.*

Bargain shops sometimes offer cut-price 8-bit games. I'm trying to persuade Sega to some more Mega-CD compilations of good Megadrive games at the mo.

MINGING

Dear Yob
Sega Power are really getting up my arse. They slag you off all the time when all they do is try to be funny, but fail miserably. They never do a real review without some stupid attempt at comedy. I mean what exactly is a 'tips nappy'? Oh yeah, Digitiser are poo.



▲ *Kintaro touching up his nipples (special move?)by Paul Marsh.*

Savatage
YOB:Now, that's the sort of statement we deplore — someone taking our pals at Sega Power to task. We won't have a word said against those lads. Living in Bath must be such a strain, and then translating the mag into all those languages and seeing it go off all around the world. It's enough to drive anyone barmy. QED.

CLINGING

Dear Yob
I have to bring certain facts to your attention — your mag has gone downhill since Lucy disappeared. What happened, was she sacked? In my opinion some of the other good-for-nothings should be given the push just so Ms Hickman could come back. She was glam, sexy and spot on in her review comments. Okay, so now Claire is the token girlie, but she looks like she's been dragged through a bush backwards compared to luvvely Lucy. Anyone else want to join the 'I Love Lucy' campaign?
Gary Staines, Bristol
YOB:If you saw Lucy now it might dampen your ardour (unless you're into straitjackets and wooden jaw clamps). Pressure of work you see. We said she was off to be a lawyer but it was just a cover to cart her off to the funny farm. Now Claire seems to be going the same way.

GIGGSY

Dear Yob
You're a nob. Do you crap out of your chin? It looks like an arse. Right finish with the insults. Hi, it's Terry (yob hater) Jeffrys from the December issue, you remember, free gifts and stuff. Oh, by the way, Mrs Shelley kindly piss off you chicken before I extract your gibblets and stick a large seasoned between your lips. My mate Andrew (smelly runt) Clark thinks Fifa International is better than Fifa '95. Please send your boys round to give him a slapping. I'll show you where he lives. Just call me. Shout 'super smell' and I'll appear on the spot, but hold your breath. PARP! You enjoyed that didn't you.
Terry Jeffrys, Beyond Help
YOB:That last letter was our tribute to 'MEAN MACHINES: The basket case years'.

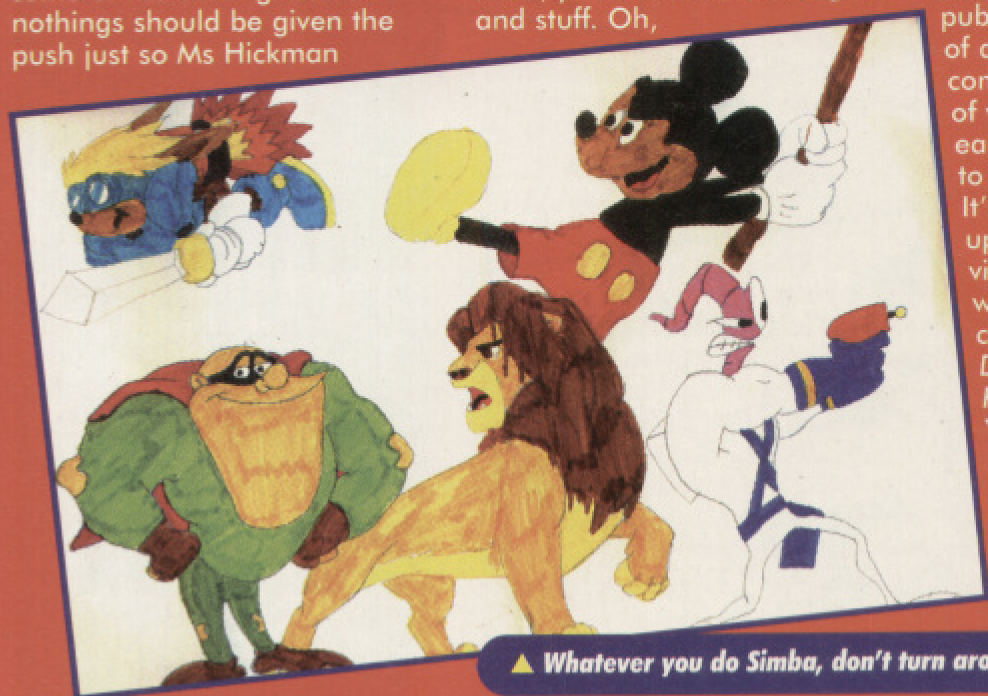
HUMMING

Dear Yob
I'm one of that rare breed, a Saturn owner. Notice I didn't say proud, as so far there's very little to be proud of as yet. Apart from Virtua Fighter, which I'm now sick of, most of the import stuff, like Gotha and Gale Racer has been rubbish. I don't even rate Panzer Dragoon — I finished it in a day or so, and Victory Goal was a major disappointment. So far that's a grand's worth of crap gameplay I've shelled out on. I think that your readers, and the general public are going to get one hell of a shock when the Saturn comes out, expecting all sorts of wonders. After all, these early import games are going to be re-packaged in English. It'll be years before we catch up with the decent stuff. In my view, you're as well sticking with a Megadrive for a good couple of years yet.
Darren McGovern, Ellsmere Port
YOB:Aren't you missing the point? Nobody ever pretended that every game on the Saturn was going to be brilliant, and that's been borne out by the likes of Tama, Deadalus and the games you've mentioned. But you're well out of order with Panzer and Virtua Fighter. And Daytona this month is a taste of lots to come. Give the machine a chance, and in the meantime, read the bloody reviews before you spend that kind of money.


▲ *Kerri Buckley's Judge Thin.*

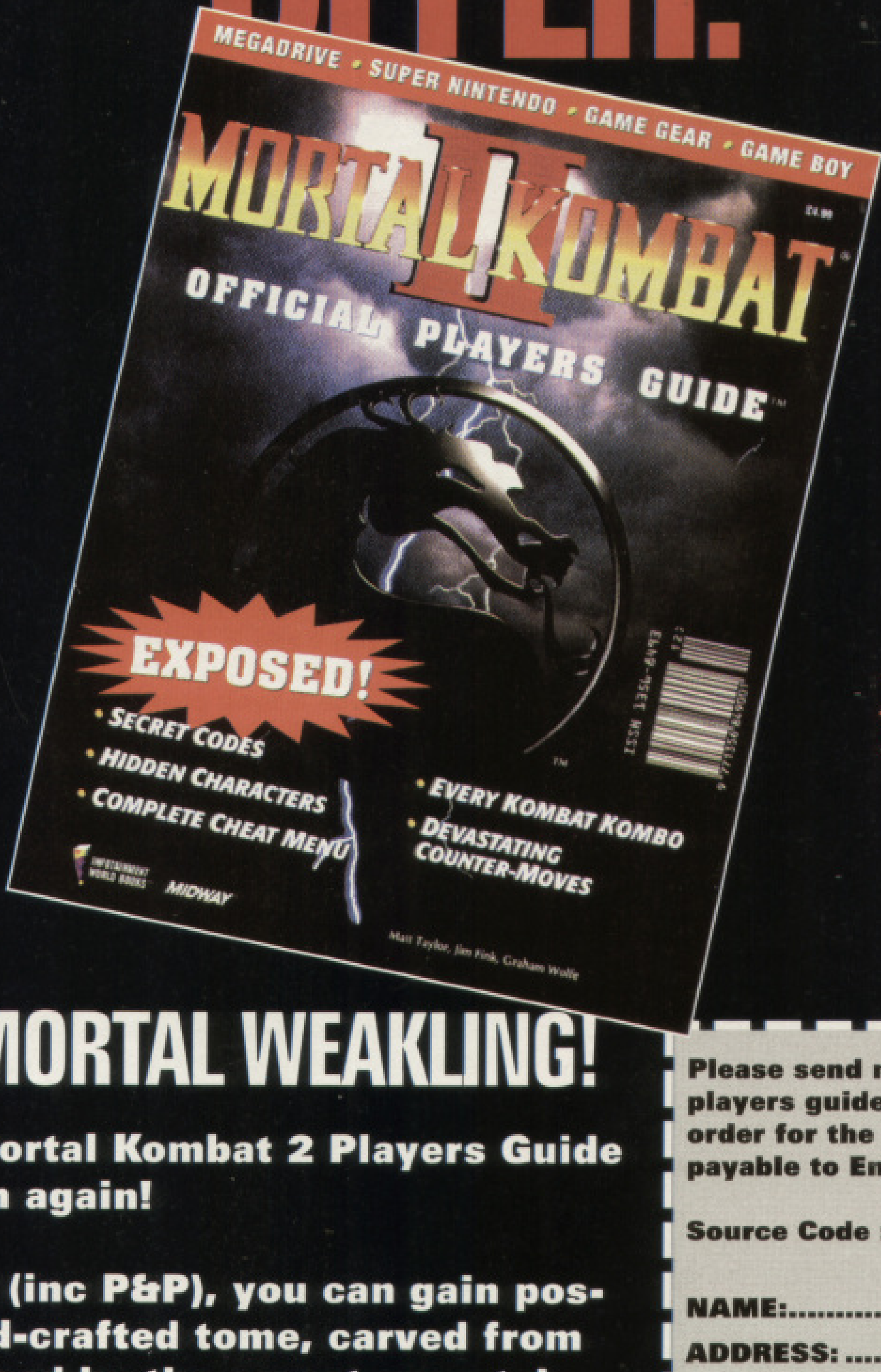
GROTTY

Dear Yob
MEAN MACHINES is starting to suck when it comes to missing games. You used to get everything in, but I've counted dozens of missed games since Christmas. What about Lethal Enforcers CD, Ushra Monster Trucks and a crop of other games that you didn't bother to cover? Okay, most of them are crap, but isn't it just as important to tell us about them. I could have gone out and bought one. I've no complaints on your big features, but your missing out on the small games.
Ian Dawson
YOB:And? Carts often arrive that are such a complete waste of space that we can't be bothered. Anyway, giving him reviews like that only upsets Paul Bufton. After Unnecessary Roughness he refused to go to the shop for a week. We basically cover everything we can, and apply this rule: if it's not in MEAN MACHINES, it's crap.


▲ *Whatever you do Simba, don't turn around! Cheers, Jeffrey Wills.*

Enough, already! Paycheque time now, though it can't be enough for sitting through the previous three pages. If you fancy another masochistic scene next month I'll be here,, with a big cheesy grin.

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Just as the Mekon sits with his enlarged cranium, overlooking his Treen warriors, Steve sits with his oversized belly, poring over the crap drivel sent in to Q&A. Still, at least the Daytona questions will stop now that the game is out on import, but a disturbing trend of 'Mortal Kombat III' queries has started. before long it'll be: 'can you be Kitana, because she was my favourite?' 'Why does Sub-Zero bark like a dog in the portal to the garden of Kahn?' and 'Can you be Goro?' I can hardly wait. Still, if you want to tax my brain with the same five questions, please feel feel to drop me a line, as it really is great fun typing in all these letters. No really it is. Really. Just make sure you address them to:
YES, BUT CAN I BE 'THE BOSS' Q&A,
MEAN MACHINES SEGA,
Priory Court,
30-32 Farringdon Lane,
London,
EC1R 3AU
And remember, lighting farts is both dangerous and unpleasant to witness.

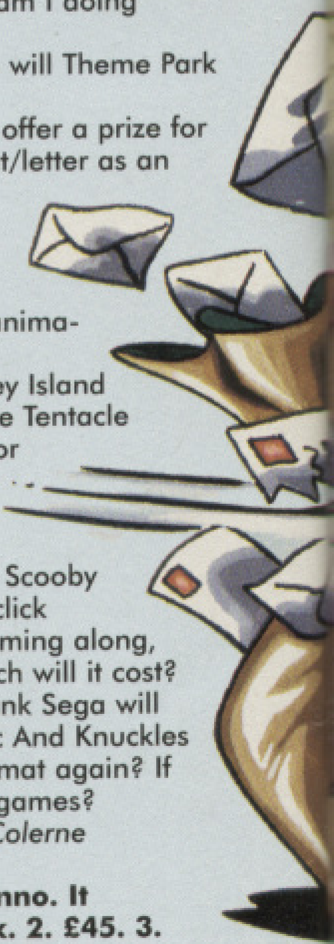
MICK MILLS

Dear St. Eve,
Please answer my questions as it will convince me that you do read all our letters. Oh yes, my big brother is also called Steve.
1. How well do you rate infra-red pads?
2. Will Mean Machines ever print an all-time 100 best-selling Megadrive games list?
3. Any chance of spending a couple of pages reviewing similar types of games — RPGs or strategy, for example?
4. Have you ever heard of Exile and Shadowrun?
5. Please rate in the order of overall, quality and lastability: Light Crusader, Story Of Thor, Soleil, Landstalker, Shining Force I and II.
6. What are your thoughts on Scrabble and Backgammon for the Megadrive?
7. What do you think of Flink?
8. What do you think of the Amiga 1200?
9. Please, please, please (I can't say it enough), add loads of games lists giving scores and info. More people will buy the mag if you do.
10. How long have you been on MMS?
11. What did you do before MMS?
12. How 'young' are you?
13. Have you got a big brother called 'Trev'?
14. Do you enjoy reading MMS?
15. Where do you read MMS?
Trevor Cooke, Eaton Socon

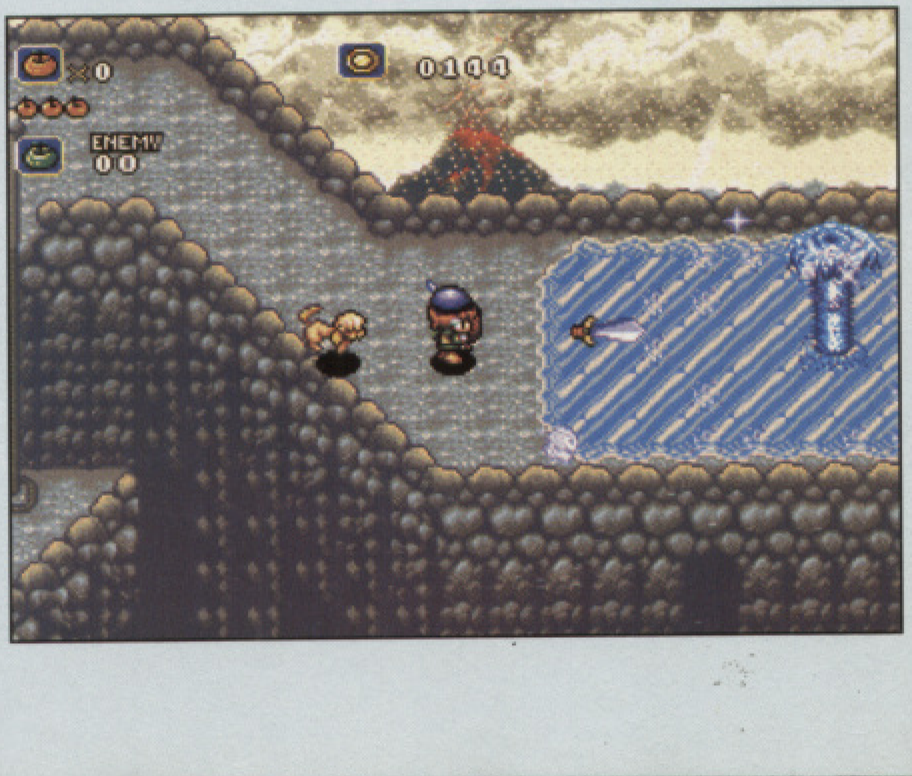
STEVE: **1. I don't they're crap. 2. Yeah, keep an eye out for it. 3. Possibly. 4. Yep, Exile's OK, but Shadowrun is a stunning RPG — sadly it's only available on import. 5. Thor, Soleil, Landstalker, Shining I and II. I won't rate Light Crusader because it isn't finished yet. Looks mighty good, though. 6. A waste of time, the board games are cheaper — unless you're Johnny No-Mates, that is. And live in Bath. 7. Pretty, but dull to play. 8. A dying beast which is long past its sell-by date. Somebody shoot it in the head. 9. I thought I'd answered this one? 10. Too bloody long. About a year and a half now. 11. I was Dep Ed on Nintendo Magazine, and then Editor of a sad rag called Megatech, which we sold to a bunch of saps in Oxfordshire. Since then, it's got thinner than someone on a Karen Carpenter diet. 12. 26. 13. Nope, just a sister called Tracy who could be ugly for England. 14. Not when it's at the proofing stage. Afterwards, when its printed, yes. 15. At my desk when I'm pretending I'm looking over the last issue.**

PETER LORIMAR

Dear Steve,
Please answer these questions.
1. I've won fifty games in a row on MKII on the Megadrive, but still haven't got to the Pong game. What am I doing wrong?
2. How much will Theme Park cost?
3. Why don't offer a prize for the best cheat/letter as an incentive?
4. Why do so few games use Flashback's animation format?
5. Are Monkey Island or Day Of The Tentacle coming out for the Megadrive?
6. How's the Scooby Doo point'n'click adventure coming along, and how much will it cost?
7. Do you think Sega will use the Sonic And Knuckles plug-thru format again? If so, for what games?
Ian Phillips, Colerne



STEVE: **1. Dunno. It should work. 2. £45. 3. Paul already offers them for the best tips, and Yob can't be arsed. 4. Because then all games would look the same. Besides, don't you**



think Flashback is a little on the slow side? 5. Monkey Island is out for the Mega-CD on import, but Tentacle isn't due for a conversion at all. 6. It's looking fine, but hasn't secured a UK release date. 7. Probably not.**



STAN BOWLES

Dear Q&A,
I am a potential Saturn/Playstation/A600/A1200 owner, and would appreciate it if you could put your vast knowledge into the following questions.
1. I am currently a Megadrive owner, and I am worried if I buy an A600 or A1200 that a) I won't be upgrading my Megadrive very much, and b) there won't be much software about because Commodore have gone bust. What do you think?
2. It has been rumoured that Saturn and PlayStation games will cost around £50. I thought CDs were cheaper than cartridges?
3. When you consider Sega's brilliant reputation in the games industry, you would expect the Saturn to be better than the PlayStation. But when you compare Virtua Fighters to Toh Shin Den, and Daytona to Ridge Racer, the PlayStation looks more capable. Would you agree?
Matthew Whyard, Taton

STEVE: **1. DO NOT BUY AN AMIGA! The machine is on its last legs, the games are dated and crap, and you are effectively downgrading your machine. 2. New systems are always initially higher priced than expected, but I dare say CD prices will tumble down — a darn sight faster than carts anyway. 3. Yes and no. Graphically, the PlayStation is better than the Saturn, but in the two cases you cite, Virtua Fighter is the better game to play than Toh Shin Den, whilst Ridge Racer loses out in the lasting appeal stakes to Daytona. Tekken, on the other hand, wipes the floor with Virtua Fighter, but enough of all that!**

ALAN DEVONSHIRE

Dear Steve,
I think your mag is brill, so please, please answer my questions.
1. Is the sequel to Earthworm Jim going to be called something crap like Earthworm Jim II?
2. When Theme Park comes out for the Megadrive, will you be able to go on the rides?
3. Should I buy a 32X or a Mega-CD II?
4. Could you list these games from best to worst: Ristar, Lion King, Theme Park, Micro Machines II, Mr Nutz II?
5. Are there any good games worth buying for the Game Gear?
6. Is there any news of a game based on the film, Speed for the Megadrive?
Gareth Scott, Co Derry

STEVE: **1. It's very likely. 2. Nope. 3. I'd wait for a Saturn, but out of those two go for the 32X. 4. Micro II, Theme Park, Lion King, Nutz II, Ristar. 5. Yep. Micro Machines II, Sonic Drift II, and Primal Rage to name but three. 6. Nope, but then driving a bus is hardly exciting game fodder is it?**

TONY WOODCOCK

Dear Steve,
Please answer these questions.
1. Is Cannon Fodder worth buying?
2. Kitana is a sod on MKII. How do I kill her?
3. Shall I buy a Mega-CD and 32X, or just one of the two? Which one?
4. Please put these in order of best to worst: MKII, Cannon Fodder, Zero Tolerance, Sonic And Knuckles
5. Is Sonic Drift II coming out for the Megadrive?
6. Do you know any cheats for MKII or Micro Machines II?
7. Is Daytona coming out for the 32X or Mega-CD?
8. Is Kick Off III better on the Megadrive or SNES?
Kye Gibbon, High Wycombe

STEVE: **1. Does the Pope wear a funny hat? 2. Use an array of punches and kicks to whittle her energy away before she does the same to you. Special moves may help. 3. A 32X. 4. MKII, Cannon, Sonic And Knuckles, Zero Tolerance. 5. Nope. 6. Yes, loads. Thanks for asking. 7. It's rumoured to be heading for the 32X, but I reckon not. 8. The SNES.**

PETER OSGOOD

Dear Steve,
It seems tat I can't take my hands off my Sega joypad. In fact, I've only stopped as my Mum has banned me from it. You see, I had a birthday recently, and Sonic And Knuckles and Micro Machines II have been added to my already impressive batch of video games. Anyway, enough about me, I need some answers. Please tell me.
1. Is Sonic Drift II coming out for the Megadrive? I read your



review of the brilliant sequel to the utterly sad first game, and will go to any length to get it, even if it means buying a Game Gear.
2. Is Chaotix going to make an appearance for the Megadrive? I can't be bothered to buy a 32X.
3. I heard that MKIII is only being converted to Nintendo systems. Is this true?
4. Is NBA Jam: TE worth buying if you have the original?
Alex Collier, Maidstone

STEVE:**1. Nay, nay and thrice nay. 2. Nope. 3. Nope. Sony have the exclusive rights, but only for three months. After this, it'll appear for the Jaguar and then everything else. 4. Nope.**

NORMAN HUNTER

Dear Steve,
I am the proud owner of a Master System and a Game Gear. I'd be grateful if you could answer these questions...
1. Is Earthworm Jim coming out for either the Master System or the Game Gear?
2. Will Cannon Fodder come out for the Game Gear or Master System?
3. I've seen Rise Of The Robots for the Game Gear and it looks ace! Do you?
4. What's your favourite Master System beat 'em up? Mine's Masters of Combat.
5. Will Primal Rage be coming out for the Game Gear?
6. Will there be any good Baseball games for the Game Gear?
7. Is NBA Jam: TE be coming out for the Master System?
8. Will International Superstar Soccer come out for the Game Gear or Master System?
9. Please put these Game Gear games in order from best to worst: Rise Of The Robots, NBA Jam: TE, Madden, NFL, FIFA, Fatal Fury, Ristar, Sonic Drift.
10. What's the best MS and GG games?
Christopher Hinkley, Bolton

STEVE:**1. You'll be pleased to know that Virgin are about to release a Game Gear version. As for the Master System: forget it! 2. Nope. 3. What, do I look ace? Yes, I like to think so. As for Rise, no it's utter garbage and should be left to fester in a bin full of ear wax. 4. I prefer MKII. 5. Yep, and it looks absolutely stunning. Well worth a gander. 6. Nope. 7. Nope, Game Gear only. 8. You've got more chance of getting Daytona for the Game Gear — ie. none whatsoever. 9. Sonic Drift, NBA, Ristar, Madden, FIFA, NFL, Rise. 10. It's a new bi-format release called 'Buying A 16bit Machine.'**

BILLY BREMNER

Dear Steve,
I would be grateful if you could answer my questions.
1. I have Cannon Fodder on the Megadrive, and I think it is brill. But it starts off very easy, before getting hard all of a sudden. Do you think so? Also, is it likely to come out for the 32X?
2. When Theme Park finally comes out, how much will it be?
3. I had Snatcher for the Mega-CD and I thought it was brilliant. Are there any more games like it coming out for the Mega-CD or 32X? Do you think it's worth an 18 certificate?
4. Are Sim City or Sim City 2000 coming out for either the Mega-CD, Megadrive or 32X?
5. Have you played Daytona USA? I think it is the best racing game ever, and spent £20 on it when I went to Blackpool. Do you think it's ace?
6. What football team do you support?
7. Is Doom II coming out for the 32X? I hope so, as Doom is ace.
Karl Dixon, Cannock

STEVE:**1. That's called a difficulty curve, and stops it getting too easy! As for a 32X version, there are no plans. 2. £45. 3. Konami are planning a sequel, and no I don't think a few still pics with a bit of blood in them are worth an 18 certificate. It's just daft. 4. Nope. 5. I do indeed. 6. West Ham. For my sins. 7. Nope.**

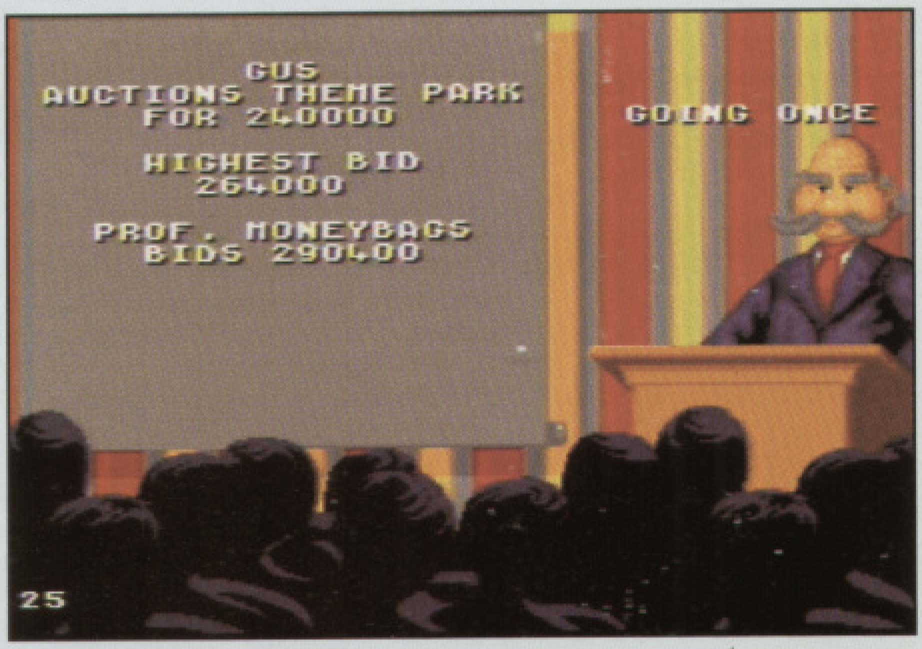
PETER BONETTI

Dear Steve,
Please answer my questions or I'll never buy your mag again.
1. Can you use Megadrive games through the 32X?
2. Do you think it's worth getting a Saturn and 32X?
3. Will you put these games from best to worst: Urban Strike, Theme Park, SSFII, FIFA '95.
4. If I got a 32X which game should I buy?
5. Is Chaotix on 32X any good?
6. When is MKIII coming out, and what systems will it be on?
7. What systems will Judge Dredd be on, and what systems will it be worth buying for?
8. Please could you tell me five games coming out for the 32X? And make sure they're decent ones.
9. As above, but for the Saturn.
10. Is the Street Fighter movie worth seeing, and when will it be out?
11. As above, but with the Dredd movie.
Daniel Mack, Downham

STEVE:**1. Yep. 2. Stick to the Saturn. 3. Theme Park, Urban, FIFA '95, SSFII. 4. MKII. 5. Read the review and find out. 6. The coin-op should be out and about now, Sega versions have yet to be announced. 7. 32X, Megadrive, and Game Gear. It'd be unfair to give it a score when it isn't finished yet. 8. Alone In The Dark II, Blackthorne, Stellar Assault, Virtua Fighter... er, sorry, I'm stuck now. 9. X-Men, MKII, Alien Trilogy, Die Hard Trilogy, Inferno. 10. No, it's utter garbage. Blanka in particular is the funniest thing on the big screen. They should rename it 'Dumb And Dumbest.' 11. It looks really good, but it's too early to say.**

JOHN BOND

Dear Steve,
Please will you answer my questions.
1. Will Theme Park be coming



out for the Mega-CD?
2. If it is, when?
3. Can you go on the rides?
4. I want to design games for my PC. Is this possible?
5. If it is, what equipment do I need?
John Blewett, Braintree

STEVE: **1. Yep, courtesy of Acclaim. 2. July. 3. Nope. 4. Yep. 5. A book on machine code, an assembler, a compiler, and bags of patience. An addiction to coffee would help, too.**

CHARLIE GEORGE

Dear Sultan Of Knowledge,
I am facing a serious dilemma at this point in my games-playing career. I have got a spare £200, but the question is: do I buy a 32X,a Mega-CD, or wait for a Saturn? In your answer, please take into account availability of games, games in the pipeline, and the price of software:
1. I'm a huge, huge Star Wars fan, and I'm wondering what's the best game out of Rebel Assault for the Mega-CD and 32X Star Wars Arcade. Also, are there any plans for any Star Wars games for the Megadrive such as the ones for the Super NES?
2. I was reading a back issue the other day, and I noticed you said someone had started on a game based on 'Fall Of The Republic', based on one of the new Star Wars films. Is this still going ahead? If so, when? Are there any other Star Wars sims planned, and could you tell me as much as possible about them — ie. release dates, etc.
3. I love games such as Zero Tolerance, Doom, etc. Is Predator Vs Aliens coming out on any Sega system, or any similar games planned.
Jas Reed, Sittingbourne

STEVE: **1. Out of those two, I'd plump for Star Wars Arcade. As for plans for converting JVC's Super Trilogy, having seen US G's Indy conversion for the SNES, I'd say it was looking quite likely. 2. Nope, no more news. A sequel to Rebel Assault is likely, though. 3. Nope. There are rumours abound of Saturn Doom, but nothing concrete.**



ALAN MULLERY

Dear Steve,
Could you please answer the following questions.
1. When is The New Breed coming out for the Mega Drive and how much will it cost?
2. Should I get SOR 3 if I already have SOR 1 and 2?
3. Is Maximum Carnage any good?
4. Is there any more news on MK 3?
5. How does X Men 2 look and play?
6. Could you put these in order from best to worst: Maximum Carnage, Samurai Showdown, Earthworm Jim, Mickey Mania and SSF 2?
Mark Ireland, Haydock, Merseyside

STEVE: **1. With Accolade going under, the project has gone on hold. 2. Yep. 3. Nope, it's complete tripe. 4. See this month's news. 5. Didn't you see the review a while back? It's fine, just nothing special. 6. EWJ, Mickey Mania, SSF, Samurai, Max Carnage.**

BOBBY MOORE

Dear Steve
I've just been looking through the Mega Mart and some chap has mentioned the 'Master Gear'. What is the Master Gear? Something for the Game Gear or a short term for Master System? I've been out of the computer world of magazines and gossip for about a year and a half now so I'm a bit confused.
Denise, Gillingham, Kent

STEVE: **No, it's a spelling mistake by some daft sod who doesn't know his ass from his elbow. You know the sort — the ones who reckon their Dad works at Capcom and told them that...**

RAY CLEMENCE

Dear Steve
I think that your mag is best and that no other mag can test it. Could you please answer my questions.
1. How do you make the goal keeper wave his hands up and down before a goal kick on FIFA '95?
2. On FIFA '95, when you have completed a league, tournament and playoffs, what do the letters mean that appear at the bottom of the screen?
3. My friend told me that on Virtua Fighters on the Saturn the screen does not spin round when you are fighting like it does in the arcade. He also says the colours are very bright and bad for the eyes. Is this true?
4. In FIFA '95 why is Florentina left out of the Italian side as a club team?
5. Can the Ultra 64 match the standards of the Sega Saturn?
Kirandeep Sokhi, Southall, London

STEVE: **1. Don't know, couldn't give a turd. 2. Dunno. 3. Nope. The screen doesn;t spin as much, but it still rotates around the fighters. As for the colour, perhaps your mate is just fed up because the screen is obviously brighter than him. 4. Because they're crap I expect. Are you for real? 5. Not at the moment, because it only exists as a small emulator for Silicon Graphics machines — ie. nobody;s seen it yet.**

DENIS LAW

Dear Steve,
Please answer my questions (my name's Steve as well, funnily enough),
1. When will the Neptune be released?
2. How much will it cost?
3. Will it come with those money off vouchers like the 32X?
4. Will it play Megadrive games?
5. I heard that there's going to be a 16bit Game Gear called the Venus. Is this true?
6. How much will it cost, and when will it be released?
Steve Seel, Applecross

STEVE: **Sharing the same name isn't that funny, I'm sure there are a few thousand Steves in this country. 1. November. 2. £170. 3. It hasn't been decided yet. Probably not, though. 4. Yep. 5. There was, but it has been scrapped. 6. Nothing — it's not coming out.**

Once again, another great array of letters are sorted, and can return to the great paper pulper of the sky. In the meantime, I'm off to read the latest issue of Mega. I just love the way the print comes off in my hands. And on my backside.

MEGA MART

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SEGA MEGA CD plus 6 game discs, as new, original cost £500+, now asking only £200. Phone Gary 0895 677140.

BLOND, Well built and twenty year old male, seeking female friend for sharing letters, maybe more. Recently split from long-term relationship. Please reply: Mark Nolan, No.1 Burroughs Piece Road, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6PR. Every letter will be answered.

MEGA CD, 5 games £100; Mega Drive games to swap. Bill Walsh and Baseball 2020 for Haunting, Zombies, Pete Sampras, Madden 95, 94, 93, EA Rugby, Winter Olympics, PGA Euro Golf, Micro Machines1, 2. Phone Mark on 081 983 3894 any time.

MEGA DRIVE for sale £150, 2 pads, 8 carts, good condition, phone after 4.30pm on 0923 440260 ask for Stuart.

SWAP MEGADRIVE, 2 pads, 8 carts, good condition for Amiga 500 or 600 with games. Phone Stuart on 0923 440260.

WANTED: The map that used to come with Ultima IV. An original or a quality copy. Tel: 0171 730 2277 extn 2500 (day) 01903 700984 (eve).

GAME GEAR, 26 games incl. Mortal Kombat, Sonic, Master System converter, TV Tuner, Magnifier, car adaptor, £250 ono. 0253 876406.

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MEGA DRIVE game for sale: Streetfighter II SCE, excellent condition only £30! Interested? Tel. Northwich (0606) 74112 after 5pm.

FOR SALE Mega Drive's "Soleil" £35 ono. Tel 0235 771407.

GAMES FOR sale: Shining Force 2 £25, Vay(CD) £25, Monkey Island (CD) £18, Night Trap(CD) £12, all USA versions. Tel 0442 69378.

MEAN MACHINES Sega mags for sale from vol.1 to vol.30 £5 a mag. Phone 071 237 1538 ask for John.

GAME GEAR + Columns + Master Gear Convertor + TV Tuner plus I'll throw in a Master System with about 30 old games, Lightphaser, etc. Ring 0181 886 5683.

AMIGA 500, 1 Meg upgrade plus lots of disks, games, bits. Going for £140 with a keyboard and lots of mags. 0181 886 5683.

MEGA DRIVE for sale, 16 top games + 4 joypads, all games over 90%, including FIFA '95, SF2, F1 worth £725 sell for an unbelievable £315 ono. Phone David on 0181 363 1191 if interested.

JUNGLE STRIKE for sale £20, Grandslam Tennis, Skitchin, Double Dragon £10, Zero Tolerance, Mortal Kombat £15, Sonic 3 £25, Menacer £27. Megadrive for sale with Pete Sampras Tennis, FIFA, new, boxed £100. Also Aladdin, Jurassic £30. The lot £290. Phone 081 997 8590.

WANTED AMERICAN adaptor for Sega Megadrive, also 6 button joypad and Streets of Rage II. Phone Billy on 081 989 7559.

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WANTED AYRTON Senna's Super Monaco GP. Willing to pay £20. Phone John on 01684 564019.

SWAP JAMES POND 2 or Super Hang-on for Alien 3 or Global Gladiators. Ring 01484 546199 after 6pm - ask for Simon Curran.

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